

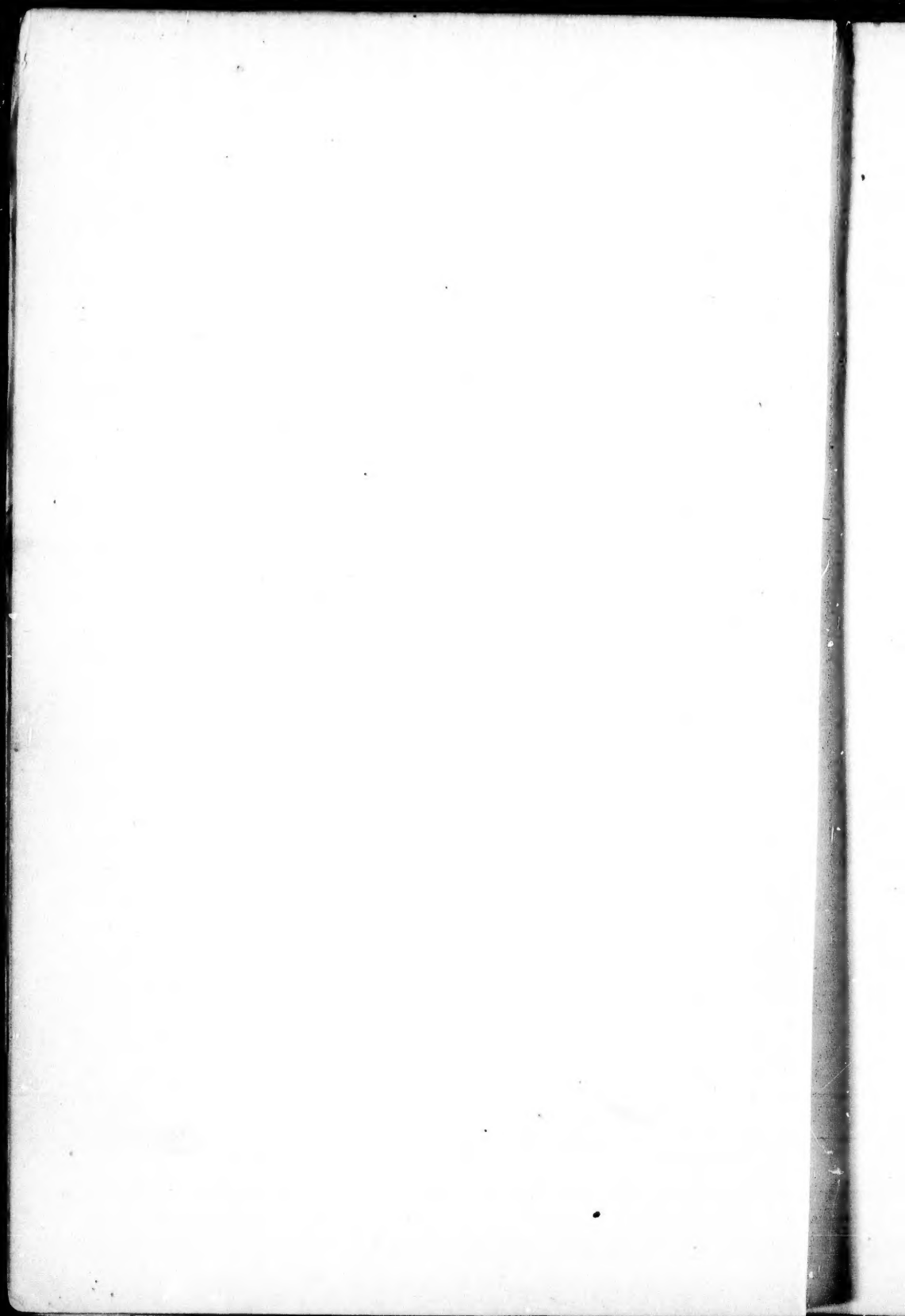
Helen C. Harvee
Hamilton

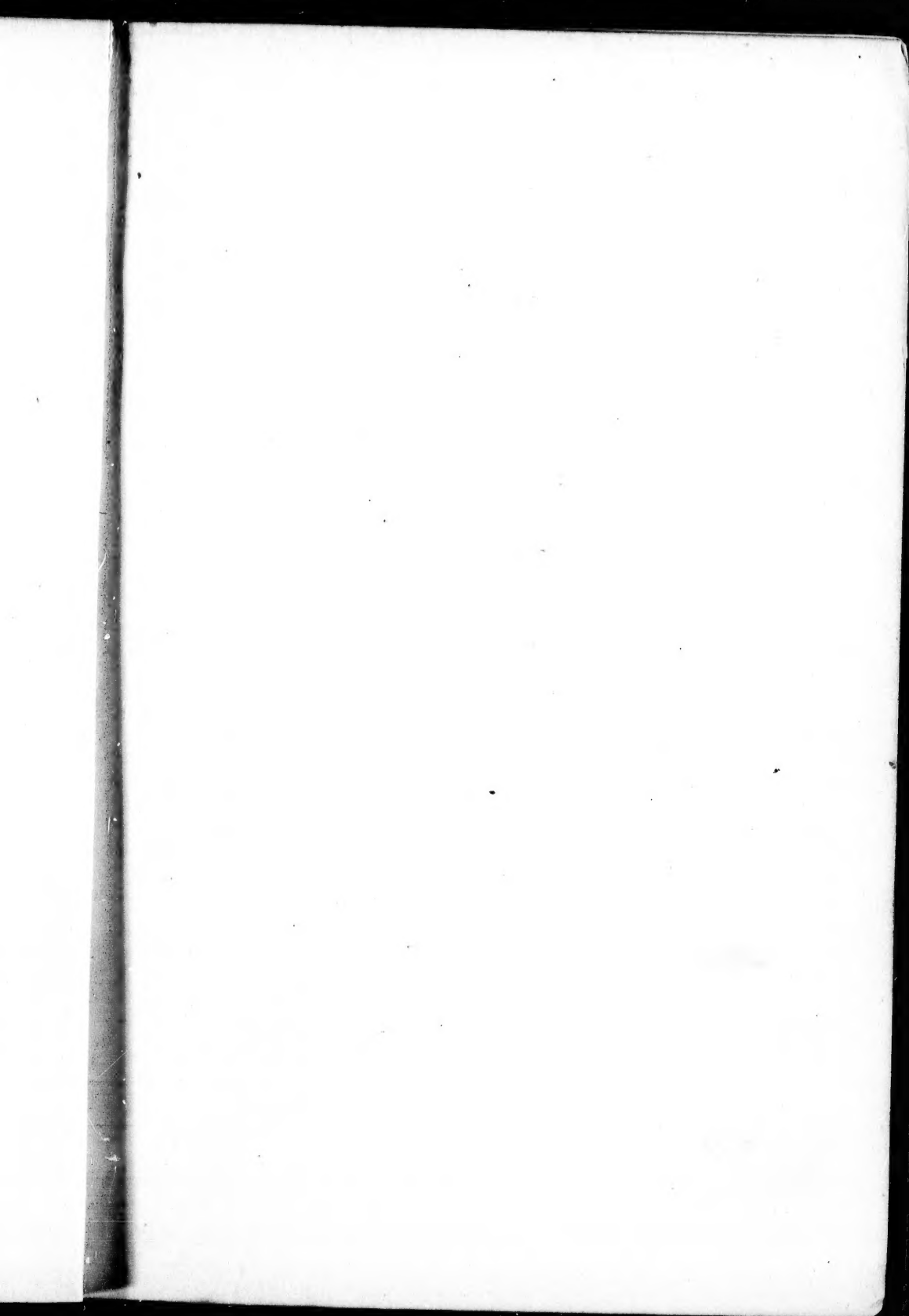
May 1847

ALICE HERBERT

AND

EMILY'S CHOICE.



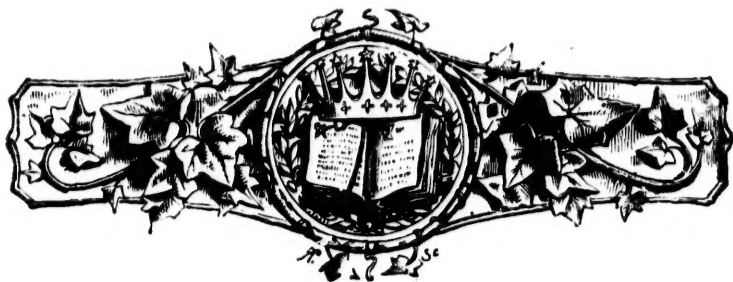




VILLAGE NEAR MONTREAL.

—Frontispiece.

“Emily’s home in the village, where she resided with her father, had been a quiet one.”—Page 66.



ALICE HERBERT

AND

EMILY'S CHOICE

HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

By E. V. N.

"Behold the great, the glorious prize,
Which Christ holds out before thine eyes;
And in thine onward, heavenward race,
Press forward with a quicken'd pace."

TORONTO
JAMES CAMPBELL AND SON

1871

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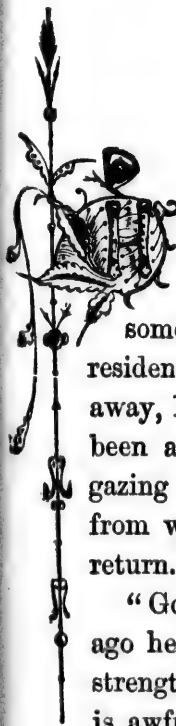
ALICE HERBERT.



CHAPTER I.

Affliction.

How blest the righteous when he dies !
When sinks a weary soul to rest.



“HOW is Mr Herbert, doctor ?”

“He is gone, poor fellow ! he is just gone !”
and Doctor Barton entered his gig, which for some time had been waiting at the gate of a pretty residence in the town of Guelph, and drove sadly away, leaving the woman to whom his words had been addressed standing alone on the pavement, gazing thoughtfully at the windows of the house from which the master had passed away, never to return.

“Gone !” she murmured ; “and only a few days ago he walked about our streets, full of life and strength, and now he is in eternity ! Oh ! but it is awfully sudden ! What will his family do now,

AFFLICTION.

poor things?" And with these pitying words, the woman went slowly and thoughtfully down the street.

We, my readers, will look behind the closed shutters into the chamber of death, where the grief-stricken widow and children are gathered around the silent form lying so white and still. Oh ! will his eyes never again look upon them with their wonted tenderness ? Will they never more hear his loved voice ? Must that dear form be buried out of their sight ? God pity them ! And He does pity His sorrowing children ; for did not the Saviour weep with those who were mourning their dead at Bethany ? and was not He a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief ?

" Much must be borne which it is hard to bear :
Much given away which it were sweet to keep.
God help us all ! who need, indeed, His care.
And yet, I know, the Shepherd loves His sheep."

—B. LYTTON.

It is a week later, and in the elegantly-furnished drawing-room of Maple Lodge—the above-mentioned residence of the late Mr Herbert—two young girls are seated, attired in deep mourning, and engaged in earnest conversation. The younger of the two is a very beautiful girl, of about fourteen ; the other, who is her sister, is two years older. She is by no means as handsome as her sister, yet there is a sweet, pensive sadness in her face, which is equally attractive.

"Helen," said Alice Herbert, the eldest girl, addressing her sister, "do you know that we shall have to leave Maple Lodge, and retire to some humbler dwelling-place ?"

AFFLICTION.

"Leave Maple Lodge! This pretty house which papa built for us! O Alice, don't say that!"

"Yes, Helen; mamma will be obliged to do so."

"Why, I thought that our dear papa had left us plenty of money."

"No, not plenty; his life was insured for an amount that will enable us to live comfortably, but not in the style which we have been used to."

"O Alice! why did God take papa away from us?" exclaimed Helen, passionately.

"Hush! dear Helen; you must not speak so. It was His will to afflict us; and though it is hard, very hard, to bear the loss of so loving a father,"—and the young girl covered her face with her hands, and wept bitterly,—
"we must try to be patient and not rebel against Him who took him away. It is for our good, the Bible tells us, that we are afflicted. It says, that He does not willingly grieve the children of men."

"I can't be patient; and I don't see, Alice, how papa's death can be said to be good for us. Mamma is heart-broken, and we are all so miserable, and will be more so by being poorer. But here comes Harry," she exclaimed, as a young man entered the room and joined them; "does he know?"

"Do I know what, Helen?" he asked his sister.

"Why, that we have to leave dear old Maple Lodge, which papa built for us."

"Yes, I know," he answered, sadly. Then turning to his elder sister, he added, "I have now decided, Alice, to accept Mr Lorme's offer to take me into his office; and

AFFLICTION.

mamma thinks that, perhaps, it would be as well for us all to remove at once to Hamilton."

"I think so too, Harry," remarked Alice; "then we would be with you. You are our only protector now, you know." And as she said so, she looked with a fond, sad expression into his face.

"Then you would not regret leaving Guelph?" he asked.

"No, not now. It would be better for us too, perhaps, to go and live amid scenes and faces that are strange to us. For although, go where we will, we can never forget dearest papa, yet here everything will constantly remind us of the happy days that have passed for ever. We must try, you know, Harry dear, and not give way to our grief, but spend our lives so that we may hope to meet him in that blessed home where he now awaits us." And here Alice read to Harry Mrs Southey's beautiful "Mariner's Hymn"—

"Launch thy bark, mariner!
Christian, God speed thee!
Let loose the rudder-bands—
Good angels lead thee!
Set thy sails warily,
Tempests will come;
Steer thy course steadily;
Christian, steer home!

"Look to the weather-bow
Breakers are round thee;
Let fall the plummet now,
Shallows may ground thee.
Reef in the foresail, there!
Hold the helm fast;
So—let the vessel wear—
There swept the blast.

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THE HERBERT FAMILY LEAVING MAPLE LODGE — *Page 5.*

AFFLICTION.

"What of the night, watchman?
What of the night?
Cloudy—all quiet—
No land yet—all's right.
Be wakeful, be vigilant—
Danger may be
At an hour when all seemeth
Securest to thee.

"How gains the leak so fast?
Clean out the hold—
Hoist up thy merchandise,
Heave out thy gold;
There—let the ingots go—
Now the ship rights;
Hurra! the harbour's near—
Lo! the red lights!

"Slacken not the sail yet
At inlet or island;
Straight for the beacon steer,
Straight for the high land;
Crowd all thy canvas on,
Cut through the foam—
Christian! cast anchor now—
Heaven is thy home!"

"O Alice!" exclaimed her brother, kissing her tenderly, as she finished, "if I were only half as good as you are! No wonder our father loved you so affectionately!"

"He loved us all; was he not the best, kindest, dearest of parents to his children?"

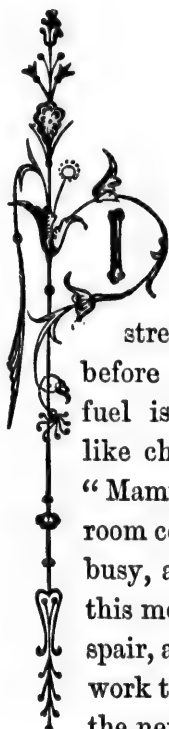
"Yes, that he was," her brother earnestly replied. "There were few like him; but next to mother, I think you were his greatest favourite."



CHAPTER II.

A New Home.

Through many a path of joy and pain,
God leads His children home.



It is a dark chilly morning about the middle of November. In a plainly-furnished room of a small house, situated in a quiet street in Hamilton, Alice Herbert is kneeling before a grate, trying hard, but in vain,—for the fuel is damp,—to stir up the fire to something like cheerfulness. “What shall I do?” she said. “Mamma will be down presently, and will find the room cold. I shall have to call Ann, although she is busy, and won’t like to be disturbed.” Happily at this moment, just as she is giving up her task in despair, and turning away to summon their maid-of-all-work to her aid, a brisk step is heard in the hall, and the next instant her brother Harry enters the room.

A NEW HOME.

"O Harry!" she exclaims, "I am so glad you have come. I can't get the fire to burn, and I don't like to call Ann, for this is washing-day, and she will be so cross if I bring her out of the kitchen to help me."

"Never mind, then ; don't call her ladyship," he promptly replied ; "I will see if I cannot do as well, and get over the difficulty." Upon this he advanced with a cheerful smile towards the hearth, and in a little, Alice, who began to lay the table for breakfast, had the satisfaction of seeing his efforts crowned with success, and the parlour lit up with a kindly glow from the fire-place.

"Ah! thank you," she smilingly said. "How stupid I was not to be able to do it!"

"No, Alice dear ; you are not stupid. I often wonder how it is that you manage to do so much, when you have not been accustomed till now to work of any kind. Look at Helen, how helpless she is! although I think, if she tried, she might do more to assist you. How greatly she has changed," he added, with a sigh, "since our trouble came upon us!"

"She feels papa's death very much, Harry," replied Alice, anxious to excuse her sister.

"Not as much as you do. She is for ever grumbling over our altered lot, and is less grieved for the loss of him than the change in our circumstances."

"Don't judge her so harshly, dear Harry. She is younger than we are, and finds, no doubt, the change harder to bear. Of her love for dear papa you no more doubt than I do."

"She loved him in a sort of way, I daresay ; but I begin

A NEW HOME.

to think, Alice, that she is too selfish to care much for anything except her own comfort."

"Ah, Harry! don't say so," pleaded Alice, sorrowfully; yet in her heart she knew his words had too much truth in them.

At that moment Mrs Herbert entered the apartment and interrupted the conversation. She was a delicate-looking woman, and the sadness of her heart was visible in her pale face. She led by the hand her youngest child, a little girl of about five years old.

"Dearest mamma," said Alice, as she kissed her tenderly, "do you feel better this morning?"

"Not much, dear," she replied; "my head aches still." And with a sigh she seated herself in the low rocking-chair which Harry had drawn to the fire for her.

"Perhaps a cup of tea will do you good. I shall see if breakfast is ready." And Alice left the room to hasten it.

"Oh, dear! what a dismal-looking morning!" murmured Helen Herbert, as she glanced from the window of her bedroom into the street, while dressing. "What am I to do with myself all day long? I have nothing to read; no friends to visit; and there is no chance of any one in the city coming to see us while we live in an out-of-the-way corner like this." And a cross, discontented expression came into her beautiful young face. "If we could only go back again to school in Toronto!" she continued. "Even school, which I used to hate, and long to be freed from, that I might exchange it for the dear old delightful vacation-time at home, would be better than a dreary life such as this. There was always some fun going on among

A NEW HOME.

the girls, and our walk every day was so enjoyable. Besides, it was so nice going on Sunday to the cathedral, where we saw all the assembled beauty and fashion of Toronto. But I suppose it is vain to hope for this : we can't go back ; it costs so much money ; and mamma will want Alice to help at home now. I wonder how she can bear all this misery so quietly as she does. She does not seem to mind our poverty one bit ; while, as for me, I am so miserable that I don't care to live." And with her heart full of discontent and bitter rebellious feelings, she descended to the sitting-room, where the rest of the family were already seated at breakfast. Besides the members of it already mentioned, there was in the room a ruddy-faced, bright-eyed boy, who smilingly exclaimed, as his sister entered—

"Late this morning, again, Helen ! What a lazy girl you are ! We have nearly done breakfast."

"I don't want any," she replied, crossly. "I'm cold ; it's like an ice-house up-stairs ;" and she advanced to the fire, and sat down to warm herself.

At this, a pained look passed over the mother's face ; and Harry, who did not fail to observe it, remarked—

"It is very strange, Helen, that you find it so cold. We were just saying how easy the house was to heat, and how comfortable therefore it would be for us during the winter."

"Perhaps you have caught cold, Helen. Do you not feel well, dear ?" inquired her mother, anxiously.

"I'm not sick, mamma," she replied, dryly.

"Helen," said Alice, desirous to change the conversation, "would you not like to resume your studies again ?"

"What do you mean ?" she eagerly inquired, her face

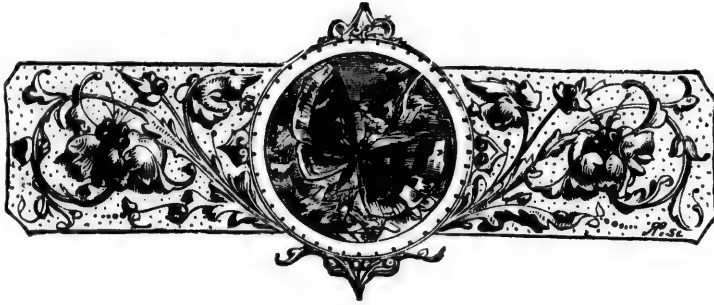
A NEW HOME.

brightening a little, as she now seated herself at the breakfast-table ; "are you going to send us back to Toronto, mamma ?"

"No ; I can't afford that now, my dear," her mother replied, with a sigh ; "but Harry has been telling me of a very good school here which Mr Lorme's daughters attend. You and Alice might go there, at all events."

"Very well, mamma ; I suppose we may as well go," she answered. "It will be something of a change, anyhow," she thought ; "and I may get acquainted with some nice girls, whom I can have for companions."

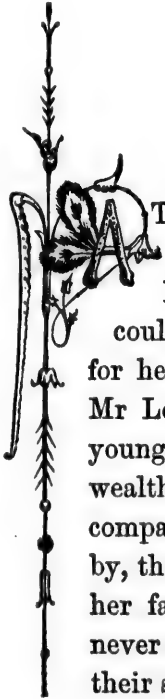




CHAPTER III.

An Errand of Mercy.

Not more than others I deserve,
Yet God hath given me more,
For I have food while others starve,
And beg from door to door.



AT Madam B——'s school Helen Herbert made, as she desired, several new acquaintances. Her pretty face, and her manners, which she could, when she chose, render very attractive, won for her many friends among her new schoolmates. Mr Lorme's daughters and Stella Warrington, a young girl about her own age, the daughter of a wealthy merchant in Hamilton, became her constant companions; and in their society, as the weeks went by, the sorrow which she experienced on account of her father's death grew less and less, though she never altogether ceased repining over the change in their style of living.

"I am ashamed to bring Stella Warrington here,"

AN ERRAND OF MERCY.

she remarked one day to Alice ; " they have such a splendid house, and this is such a small, plainly-furnished dwelling, so different from theirs."

" No matter, Helen. She must know that we are not rich, as they are ; and if she is a friend worth having, she will not care whether you are rich or not, or what kind of house you live in."

" It is very easy for you to say so ; you do not feel about such things as I do. I can never be really as happy as I used to be, now that we are reduced to this poverty." And with these words, spoken with irritation, she left the room.

" Can it be possible," Alice thought, " that she has so soon forgotten our darling papa as to talk of being happy if we were *only* in better circumstances? And he loved her so, too, calling her his pretty Helen, and petting her so fondly! O papa, papa! how dreary life is without the light of your smile, and the sound of your loved voice! Her tears fell fast and silently, as she thought of that quiet grave, in a far-off cemetery, where her beloved parent lay sleeping calmly, until the last day, when, at the sound of the angel's trump, "the grave would give up its dead."

Unlike Helen, Alice had made no intimate friends at school, although every one liked the sweet girl who had come among them. She studied hard, hoping to be able some day to assist her family in their straitened circumstances by teaching. When not engaged with her studies, her time at home was fully occupied assisting in household duties, for she was ever the same affectionate, dutiful daughter, and kind, patient sister. Nor did she, amid these en-

AN ERRAND OF MERCY.

grossing cares, forget the claims of another and better world. Earnestly and frequently did she bend in humble supplication at the throne of grace, praying both for strength to enable her to bear patiently the bitter trial it was the Father's will to send her, and for grace to sustain her in a holy life, that when the end came, the blessed Saviour might take her to dwell in "that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," where her loved parent had gone before her. For Mr Herbert had been a Christian; and when the angel of death summoned him away, he was not afraid to go, for he was at peace with God, and he died calmly committing his beloved ones to the care of Him who is the Father of the fatherless, and the help of the widow.

It is Saturday morning, and Alice, with her work-basket beside her, is busily engaged sewing, while her young sister Eva, the darling of the household, is sitting near her drawing houses on a slate.

"O Miss Alice!" said Ann, as she came into the room and addressed her gentle young mistress, to whom she had become greatly attached, "there is a poor child out here, nearly dead with the cold, begging for something to eat."

Alice, who was ever ready to pity, and, as far as she could, relieve those in distress, arose at once from her seat, and, followed by Eva, went into the kitchen; and there, beside the stove, stood a delicate-looking, thinly-clad little girl, trying to warm her half-frozen limbs. There was a look of weary sadness in her pale face, very touching in one so young, which went straight to Alice's sympathising heart. Alice soon drew from the child her

AN ERRAND OF MERCY.

story of distress, and learned that she was the eldest of three little ones ; that her mother was lying ill ; and that father, as she pathetically added, was dead.

"Just like our papa," whispered Eva to her sister, her pretty blue eyes filling with tears. "I will ask mamma if I can give her one of my jackets to keep her warm." And full of sympathy for the poor orphan, she ran away quickly to her mother to obtain her leave.

Mrs Herbert, attracted by Eva's story, came herself to the kitchen ; and soon Eva, having obtained her mother's consent, had the satisfaction of seeing the little girl comfortably clothed in one of her warm coloured dresses.

Mrs Herbert having on inquiry learned that the child lived in the neighbourhood, sent her home with a supply of provisions for her mother and sisters, and a promise that she would soon follow her and see how they were off.

That very afternoon, accordingly, accompanied by Alice, Mrs Herbert started off on this friendly errand, and soon found out the street where the family lived. On inquiring for Mrs Cowper—for that was the woman's name—they found that she occupied an upper room in an old tenement, nearly each apartment of which formed a separate dwelling, and held a family almost equally poor. On knocking at the door of this upper room, which was opened by the little girl they had seen in the morning, they were ushered into a wretched garret, with scarcely an article of furniture in it, and, cold as the day was, only the semblance of a fire smouldering in the small, black, cheerless stove. On a low miserable bed in a corner lay a young woman, in whom, when she turned her thin pale face towards them

AN ERRAND OF MERCY.

as they entered, Mrs Herbert, to her surprise, recognised a faithful servant who had lived with her some years before ; and she, it needs hardly be said, was the widow they were in quest of, and the mother of the little fatherless child.

Mrs Cowper did not at first know Mrs Herbert in her weeds, but when she became aware that it was her former mistress, the poor creature wept tears of joy, and thanked God for sending her such a friend in her exceeding helplessness and sore distress. They had not, she told Mrs Herbert, been many weeks in Hamilton. She had come from Coburg with her husband, who had been promised work in a foundry, but having been taken ill, had died, shortly after their arrival, leaving her and her children friendless and penniless in a strange city. She had sold everything which she possessed of any value, and being completely prostrated by the grief and anxiety which she had endured, and by exposure to the cold, she was confined to her bed, and compelled, in order to avert utter starvation, to send her eldest child out into the streets the day before to beg for food. The case was pitiful. Mrs Herbert's sympathy for her and her little ones was keen and deep. She relieved her as far as her means would permit, and tried to cheer her with the hope of better days for herself and children, bidding her trust in Him who, she herself knew, was emphatically the Friend of the fatherless and the widow.

“ Be kind to one another :
This is a world of care ;
And there's enough of needful woe
For every one to hear : ”

AN ERRAND OF MERCY.

But if you ease the burden
That weighs another down,
That touch of Christian charity
Will lighten half your own."

—A. L. WESTCOMBE.

Ah! how the heart is cheered by human love and sympathy! What a sad world this would be without them! Kind looks and loving words—with what healing power do they fall upon the crushed and weary spirit! Poverty is then easier to bear, sickness less wearisome, and sorrows are lightened even when they are near. Thus the poor mother, rescued from despair by Mrs Herbert's kindness and aid, began gradually to recover her strength, and tried to look forward with something like hope to the future.





CHAPTER IV.

Helen's Selfishness.

Beloved self must be denied,
The mind and will renew'd;
Passion suppress'd, and patience tried,
And vain desires subdued.

I HAVE some news for you to-day, mamma, which will please both you and Alice," were the words addressed by Harry to his mother, one evening, shortly after. "Mr Lorme wants a woman to take charge of the rooms in his office. I spoke to him about your *protégée*, Mrs Cowper, and he is willing to engage her at once on our recommendation. She is to have two nice rooms in the basement, and a sum paid her by Mr Lorme which, I should think, will be sufficient to support her and her family comfortably. So all she has to do is to remove, to-morrow if she likes, for the premises are ready to receive her."

"That is indeed pleasant news to tell Mrs Cowper—

HELEN'S SELFISHNESS.

Poor woman! how thankful she will be!" replied his mother.

"Ah, Harry! how glad I am!" exclaimed Alice, joyfully. "She was saying, the other day, she trusted that God would help her; and He has done so."

"It is a lucky thing for her," continued Harry, "that the post should have been vacant at the present moment; and Mr Lorme has offered to pay her a month in advance, on account of her being so destitute. Very kind of him, too, is it not?"

"Indeed it is, Harry dear," answered Mrs Herbert; "it will enable her to buy some things towards furnishing her new home, for she has had, as you are aware, to part, in her extreme destitution, with so much of her furniture."

"Girls," said Harry, about an hour afterwards, to his sisters, "I am slightly puzzled what Christmas-presents to get for you. What would you like, Helen?"

"Ah! I should like so much to have a jet-chain like Ida Lorme's, Harry," she eagerly replied.

"A chain!" repeated her brother, smiling. "Very well, Miss Vanity; I shall see what I can do. Alice," he continued, turning to her, "I was looking at a beautiful little book of sacred poetry the other day, in one of the book-stores; I think you would like it."

"I am sure I should, dear Harry, but"— And she hesitated, and the colour came slightly into her face.

"But what, Alice?" echoed he. "Is there anything else you would like better?"

"Oh no!" she quickly replied; "but if, instead of the

HELEN'S SELFISHNESS.

book, you would give me the money you require to pay for it, I would rather have it."

"Certainly; I shall do so, if you prefer it," said her brother.

"What do you want to buy, Alice?" asked her sister, curiously.

"Nothing, Helen. I shall give it to Mrs Cowper."

"Oh! that's the mystery, is it?" exclaimed Harry, as, looking very fondly into her face, he added, "It is just like you, Allie; always thinking of others in preference to self. I was going to buy a picture I took a fancy to yesterday; but I will follow your good example of charity and self-denial, and give the price of it to you rather for Mrs Cowper."

"Thank you, Harry," said Alice, with a pleased smile; "that will be doing a good act. Helen, won't you give up the chain, and add to our contribution for the poor widow and her children?"

"Oh! she will get on very well now without," was Helen's reply; "and I do so want the chain Harry is to give me."

"But remember, Helen, that we should pity and relieve the poor; they are God's poor, you know."

"I prefer having the chain," she coldly answered, "if Harry gets it for me."

This reply caused Alice more than usual vexation and disappointment, and her sister's selfishness pained her deeply. Harry said nothing, but the difference between his sisters struck him forcibly. To Alice he felt his heart drawn, if possible, closer than ever; and he silently made

HELEN'S SELFISHNESS.

the resolution that he would try, with God's help, to become more like her. Before evening, Alice had informed Mrs Cowper of the good fortune which had befallen her, handing her at the same time three dollars, which Harry had given her. She was, poor woman, truly grateful to the Herberts for all they had done for her; and she piously traced all their interest in her case to the pitying care and suggestion of her heavenly Father. It takes very little sometimes to cheer the hearts of the dejected, to bring back the glad light to their eyes, or the cheerful smile to their faces; and yet out of our abundance we too often withhold that little, and look with indifference on the sorrows and trials of others. They are nothing to us; we do not feel them; and self is all we care for. This should not be; for the Bible tells us to be "kind one to another, tender-hearted, bearing one another's burdens, and so fulfilling the law of Christ."

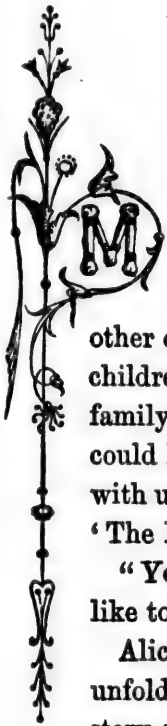




CHAPTER V.

A Mother's Dream.

Be still, my heart, these anxious cares
To thee are burdens, thorns, and snares ;
They cast dishonour on thy Lord,
And contradict His gracious word.



AMMA," said Alice, as she entered her mother's apartment one morning with a newspaper in her hand, "you were talking the other day of the strangely different fortunes which children of the same class, and even of the same family, experience in life ; and wishing that you could look into the future to see how it would fare with us. There is in this paper a short story, called 'The Mother's Vision ;' may I read it to you ?"

"Yes, my dear," Mrs Herbert replied ; "I should like to hear it."

Alice then took a seat near her mother, and unfolding the paper, began to read, as follows, the story entitled—

A MOTHER'S DREAM.

"THE MOTHER'S VISION."

It is Christmas Eve. In a comfortable parlour, where, as it is still dusk, the lamps have not yet been lighted, or the curtains drawn to shut out the lingering day, a group of happy children are playing in the twilight, while, near the bright, cheerful fire, a lady is sitting in an easy-chair, watching them with loving eyes. "My darlings! my precious ones!" she murmurs softly, as their merry accents and glad laughter falls upon her ear. "Oh that I could ever shield you from care and sorrow! that I could always keep your hearts as light and joyous as they are now! But, alas! I cannot; childhood will ere long pass away, and then each one must take up his burden, be it light or heavy, and bear it through the coming years." Into the mother's breast there crept a yearning desire to pierce the veil which an all-merciful Father has drawn between us and futurity. "Oh," she sighed, "that I could penetrate into those coming years, and assure myself that it will be only well with one and all of them!"

Suddenly there stood beside her a radiant form of surpassing loveliness and purity, and in awe and wonder the mother gazed upon his angelic face.

"Your cry has been heard," he softly murmured; "and I have been sent to tell you that your desire will be fulfilled. You shall behold one scene in the life of each of your children, as it will be this very night twenty years hence, long after you have passed away from them. Now, upon whose life-scene at that moment will you that I should raise the curtain first?"

A MOTHER'S DREAM.

"I should like, first of all," the mother eagerly answered, "to see what shall then be in store for my first-born—my gentle, loving Amy."

The sound of her children's voices has died away ; for a moment there is darkness, and then she finds herself in a neatly-furnished apartment. A pleasant-looking coloured woman, decked in a crimson turban, and a bright-green dress—her best attire, no doubt, and donned in honour of the night—sits dozing in an easy-chair beside a little crib, in which a lovely babe lies sleeping. In a corner stands a pretty low bed, where two curly heads are nestling ; while at the foot of the couch, in anticipation of a visit from Santa Claus in the morning, several little stockings are hanging, among which is a pair of tiny socks for the year-old baby-brother sleeping in the cot. There are sounds of approaching footsteps, and the nurse arouses herself, rubs her eyes, and adjusts her turban. A lady enters the room. The mother starts in surprise. Is it her own image she is gazing upon ? but then she remembers that twenty years have come and gone. It is her daughter that stands before her, and wondrously like her is the fair, gentle face, with its sweet blue eyes, and soft brown hair. A gentleman follows her ; he is tall, handsome, and smiling, and carries sundry toys and small parcels, some of which he assists the lady to secrete, when possible, in the little stockings and socks, while the larger presents are disposed in tempting array on a stand by the bedside of their darlings ; after which, as they bend over them with tenderness, and survey them with pride, the scene fades

A MOTHER'S DREAM.

away from the mother's sight, and she is alone with the heavenly being, who inquires—

“Which of your children's fortune shall I show you next?”

“I would now know the fate of my bright-eyed, merry-hearted Maud. Surely her lot will also be a happy one in life!”

Scarcely had the words gone out of her lips when she stood in one of the silent cities of the dead. The chill wind moans through the leafless trees, and sweeps over the lonely moonlit graves. In an agony of horror she looks around for her companion. The white robed form, with folded wings, is bending in silence and sadness over a white memorial-stone, close by her side. She draws nearer, and by the light of the moon, which glimmers with its cold, silvery sheen over the quiet tomb, she reads words inscribed, which tell her that her darling's form has lain for years in the darksome grave. Very bitter was the mother's grief at this revelation; and when again the angel asks, “Which one now?” she in faltering accents murmurs,—“My brave, talented Philip: oh! what of him?”

The next vision reveals a lofty, brilliantly-lighted drawing-room, tastefully decorated with flowers, evergreens, and holly-berries. In a corner of the spacious apartment there is a Christmas-tree, hung with a variety of costly and beautiful presents. On a velvet couch, drawn near the fire, which glows in a handsome, brightly-furbished grate, sits a richly-dressed lady, her pretty face lighted up with smiles, and her eyes following the movements of several

A MOTHER'S DREAM.

lovely children, who are amusing themselves in the room. Presently a tall manly form enters. The lady calls him Philip, and her eyes brighten at his approach. The little ones hasten to meet him with glad shouts of welcome, and soon he joins them in their play—the merriest one among them. Erelong the apartment begins to fill with guests, and words of friendly greeting and kind wishes are spoken, and then the scene passes away, and the angel again repeats his inquiry, and the mother answers, “Nora, my merry little Nora, what will the future bring to her?”

It is a dimly-lighted room in which the mother now stands, and a slender, black-robed form is kneeling before her. The mother, unseen, draws near, and gazes on the pale countenance of the suppliant. It is indeed her daughter whom she wished to see, though the sad tearful face before her bears no resemblance to the merry little Nora. Her lips, as she observes, move in prayer, and still nearer the mother bends to listen to her supplication :—

“Jesu, pitying Saviour ! this blessed eve to Thee I bring my lonely, aching heart. Thou knowest all its sins and sorrows, and Thou alone canst heal my weary broken spirit ; and Thou canst pity, for Thou has suffered, and bled, and wept for Thy poor sinful sorrowing ones. Holy Saviour ! from the vain unsatisfying pleasures of the world I turn to give Thee all my love, my life ! Although the path through which Thou leadest me be lonely and rough and dark, I would follow Thy guiding steps, if Thou let me, when the end shall come, pass through the narrow gate which leads into Thy home, where ‘God shall wipe

A MOTHER'S DREAM.

away tears from all our faces, and there shall be no more night, nor sorrow, nor pain.'"

With a low yearning cry, the mother sought to clasp her sorrowing child to her loving breast ; but at this moment the vision vanished, and she is again alone with the angel by her side, who once more asks her, in accents fraught with tender pity, "Of which one now, poor helpless mortal, shall I unveil the future?" And the mother, with aching saddened heart, replies, "For Harry, our household pet, my baby-boy."

It is the interior of a gambling-saloon, apparently in some foreign land. At a table in the centre of the room two men are seated, playing cards ; money glitters on the table, and several spectators have gathered round, watching with interest the progress of the game. Closer around him the angelic attendant folds his spotless mantle, and veils his face as he draws near the group, and stops, with his head bowed in pity and grief, beside one of the gamblers. His youthful, handsome face is white with suppressed excitement ; from his brow, his soft, curling locks are pushed back in wild disorder ; his eyes glare with a fierce, intense light. The game draws to a close ; his opponent coolly sweeps the shining gold and silver towards him (for he has won all), and then with a sinister smile looks triumphantly around. That smile seems to madden the young man, for a sudden flush passes over his face, and he leaps passionately to his feet, pushing the small table at which they were seated violently aside. He then springs madly at his companion, and, with a loud oath, attempts to grasp his

A MOTHER'S DREAM.

throat. A scene of great excitement follows ; but the mother saw no more, for in her grief and terror, she cried out wildly, and then she became conscious some one was fondly kissing her cheek, and calling to her to wake up, telling her that she had been dreaming.

She looked around the familiar parlour, now brightly lighted, and with the pretty crimson curtains closely drawn. It was Nora's voice that spoke to her ; and Maud stood beside her, holding little Willie, who, with outstretched arms, was coaxing mamma to take him. She had indeed been dreaming ; and how intense was her joy to find that her desire had not been granted ; that the scenes through which she had passed would never be realities ; that through the coming years she would not be haunted by those sad visions, as though they were revelations of what the future had in store for her children.

"I can still look forward with hope," she said, "and trust to our merciful Father, who in His wisdom has thought best to veil the future from us, that it will be well with them.

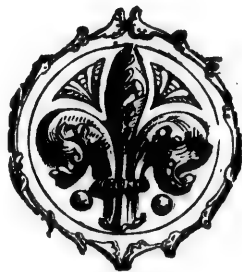
" ' Father of all, oh ! guide them,
The pattering little feet,
While they are treading the up-hill road,
Braving the dust and heat.
Aid them, when they grow weary,
Keep them in pathways blest ;
And when the journey is ended,
Saviour, oh, give them rest.' "

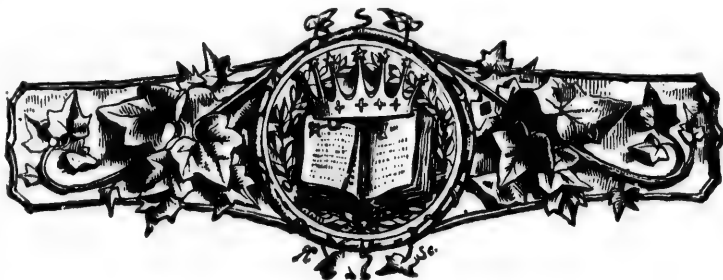
—J. PARRY.

"And I also, Alice, dear," said Mrs Herbert, when her daughter had finished the story, "will and do trust in the

A MOTHER'S DREAM.

loving-kindness of our merciful Father that it will be well with my children ; that 'the Lord will send His angel and prosper their way, and preserve their going out and their coming in, from this time forth and even for evermore.'"

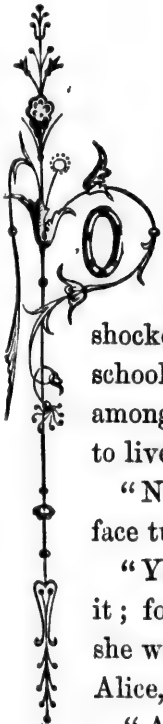




CHAPTER VI.

Stella's Illness.

Let each one ask himself, "Am I
Prepared should I be call'd to die?"

ONE morning in the early spring, as Alice and Helen Herbert entered the schoolroom at Madam B——'s, they were startled and shocked by the intelligence that one of their young schoolmates, who only a few days before had been among them, was dangerously ill, and not expected to live.

"Not expected to live!" exclaimed Helen; her face turning pale from the sudden shock.

"Yes," said Ida Lorme, "and she does not know it; for she is quite unconscious, and the doctor says she will pass away in that state. Is it not awful, Alice, to be taken away so suddenly?"

"Awful, indeed! especially if poor Mary is not

STELLA'S ILLNESS.

prepared to appear before God. Oh, girls!" Alice continued, with deep earnestness, "does not this remind us of the solemn truth, 'that in the midst of life we are in death,' that at any moment our souls may be required of us?"

"What a dreadful thing death is!" said Stella Warrington, thoughtfully.

"It is not dreadful, dear Stella," answered Alice, "to those who love the Lord Jesus, the pitying Saviour of sinners, for they go to Him in His Father's home, where there are many mansions; and where, as He has said, He will receive them, and dwell with them for ever."

"Yes, I know that; those who are good will be happy. But oh! I hope it will be a long time before I die, for it does seem very dreadful to me." And Stella shuddered.

"And to me too," said Helen.

"Yes," Mabel Lorme answered; "and Mary is so young too; not as old as I am."

"Does not that remind us," said Alice, looking with her sweet, earnest eyes into Mabel's grave face, "that however young we are, we ought to be prepared for death, for after death, you know, comes the judgment? Mary, no doubt, thought that she had a long time to live; yet see how suddenly she is summoned away to another world. Every day, when we look at her vacant seat, we ought to think it may be our turn next; and try to live so as to please our heavenly Father."

"Oh! how earnestly I wish, Alice," said Stella War-

STELLA'S ILLNESS.

rington, "that I could think and speak as calmly of death as you do!"

And at this moment Madam B—— entered the school-room; so the girls parted silently to their respective seats and their several studies.

A fortnight later, and Stella Warrington's desk in the schoolroom was also vacant. She had caught a violent cold, which was thought only temporary; but day after day passed, and still she did not return to school.

"She does not seem to grow much better," remarked Helen Herbert—who frequently went to see her—one evening after her return from Mrs Warrington's; "her cough is very troublesome, and she is getting so thin and weak."

"Poor girl!" said Mrs Herbert; "her mother is becoming exceedingly anxious about her. She told me so yesterday,"—for Mrs Warrington, to please her daughter Stella, had made Mrs Herbert's acquaintance some months before. "And Stella," continued Mrs Herbert, "is becoming so low-spirited; she seems to be nearly all the time thinking of poor Mary's death, and is beginning, I think, to fancy that she is going to die too."

"Ah! I hope not," remarked Alice, earnestly, for she remembered the young girl's terror of death when she spoke to her about Mary. "I did not think, Helen, when I saw her a few days ago, that she was seriously ill."

"No one thought so at first," Helen replied; "but she is not getting any better, and suffers a good deal sometimes. It must be so tiresome for her to be lying day after day in her room, and these our Easter-holidays

STELLA'S ILLNESS.

too, the full enjoyment of which we anticipated, having devised so many plans for our amusement."

"It is very trying, no doubt," answered Mrs Herbert, "to have the cup thus summarily pushed aside from the lips. But, Helen, she must submit patiently to God's will ; that is better for her, as for the rest of us, than any momentary gratification of our petty wishes. He has seen fit to send her this illness ; and it should teach you too, my love, the uncertainty of everything earthly. Man proposes, but God disposes. Ah ! how true that is !" And Mrs Herbert pressed her hand over her eyes to keep back the tears which memory, at this reflection, brought so bitterly into them.






CHAPTER VII.

Alice's Visit to Stella.

Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are ;
While on His breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there.



THE day after this conversation, Mrs Warrington's carriage drove up to the door, and a hurried note from that lady was handed to Alice Herbert, asking her to come and see her daughter, as Stella was very anxious that she should visit her. Alice willingly complied with Mrs Warrington's request, and soon after drove away in the stylish carriage which was waiting for her—greatly to the surprise of Helen, who wondered why her sister should have been sent for instead of herself, as Stella had always been her own particular friend and companion.

On arriving at Mrs Warrington's handsome residence, Alice was ushered into the elegantly-fur-

ALICE'S VISIT TO STELLA.

nished drawing-room, where Mrs Warrington soon joined her, and received her very kindly. She looked pale and anxious, and to Miss Herbert's inquiry how Stella was, replied—

"She has passed a very bad night, and is quite worn-out this morning. Ah, Miss Herbert! I feel so uneasy about her! If I should lose her—my daughter! my darling Stella!" And the mother's voice was full of anguish, and her tears flowed unrestrainedly.

"Do not imagine the worst for Stella, dear Mrs Warrington," Alice answered, in tones of affectionate sympathy.

"I try not to do so, but I cannot put away the dreadful thought. She is so anxious to see you, Miss Herbert, and the first thing she asked me to do this morning was to send for you. We had better go up-stairs at once, for she knows you are come, and is expecting you."

Mrs Warrington went no farther than the door of Stella's apartment, and left Alice to go in alone, as she did not wish her daughter to witness her agitation.

The apartment into which Alice was ushered was cheerful, and tastefully furnished; and there lay Stella Warrington, on a neat, low bed, surrounded by all the comforts which wealth can provide to alleviate her sufferings. Stella turned eagerly towards Alice as she approached her couch, and held out her hand with a glad look of welcome. Though not many days had passed since Alice had seen her, she was struck with the change that had taken place in her appearance. The thin, white face upon which she gazed was so unlike the bright, blooming Stella Warrington of a few weeks before.

ALICE'S VISIT TO STELLA.

"Are you suffering much now, dear Stella?" Alice asked, as she took a seat beside her.

"Not just now ; but I could not sleep during the night, my cough was so troublesome. I thought the morning would never come." And the sick girl turned wearily on her pillow.

"But it did come, you see, and you are easier now,—at least, a little ; and, please God, Stella, you will get better soon," said Alice, cheerfully.

"I am afraid that I shall never get well ; that I am going to die, as Mary did." And an anxious, troubled look came into her pale young face.

"I hope not, dear Stella," Alice replied, tenderly.

"But I may ! and poor mamma won't let me talk to her about it. What am I to do ? Ah, Alice !" she exclaimed, in beseeching tones, as she gazed wistfully into her sweet face, "you are not afraid of death ; oh, teach me, like you, not to dread it !"

"Look to Jesus, Stella, our loving, pitying Redeemer, who laid down His life that we might be delivered from all evil and live with Himself through a blessed, glorious eternity."

"But I am not fit to die ; I have not loved God and tried to please Him, as I ought to have done."

"Begin now, dear Stella. Pray to Jesus to wash away your sins in His precious blood. Turn to Him with your whole heart and He will have mercy upon you, for He has said, 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.' He is waiting to be gracious to those who come to Him for pardon and peace."

ALICE'S VISIT TO STELLA.

"Ah, Alice! how can I leave all those I love, and go away alone?"

"You will not be alone: our heavenly Father will send His angels to bear you safely through the dark river to His own home, where you will see the Saviour's face, and dwell among the pure, holy angels for ever and ever."

Long and earnestly did Alice talk to the sick girl of the glories of that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and affectionately did she assure her of the forgiveness of Him who is ever ready to receive penitent sinners.

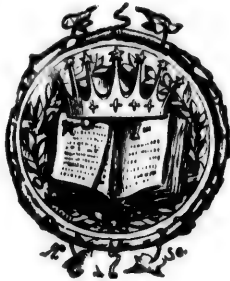
"I like," said Stella, "to hear you talk to me about the Saviour, Alice; I do not feel quite so much afraid of death when you are with me."

When Alice left, Stella made her promise that she would soon return again.

Stella Warrington was an amiable, affectionate girl, very much beloved by her family, and a favourite, indeed, with all who knew her; but her heart and thoughts were too much set upon the good things of this world, which God had given her so richly to enjoy. She lived in them, and for them, with scarcely a thought of the Lord Jesus, or of the life to come hereafter. Earthly love and happiness filled her heart. Thoughts of death and eternity were put away from her, as something very far off, and even dreadful to be thought of, especially while she was yet young, and strong, and full of enjoyment. But when weary sickness and suffering came so suddenly upon her, vain then, indeed, seemed all the comfort this world could yield her. Even in the affection of those she loved so dearly she

ALICE'S VISIT TO STELLA.

could not find rest for her troubled spirit ; only at the feet of Jesus, praying for pardon, Alice assured her, could she expect to find peace, otherwise denied her, and only by trust in His merits would she be enabled to look calmly on the face of that death, the thought of which so disquieted her. He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto Him and live.

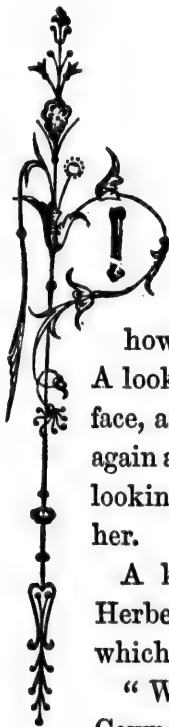




CHAPTER VIII.

Religious Influence.

Religion is the chief concern
Of mortals here below ;
May we its great importance learn—
Its sovereign virtue know.



INTO a neat, comfortable room of the home which their kind friends had procured for them, we will here glance for a little, and see how it fares with Mrs Cowper and her children. A look of quiet content now rests on the mother's face, as she sits sewing busily, and casting now and again a complacent, loving glance at her rosy, happy-looking little ones, who are playing merrily about her.

A knock is heard at the door, and Ann, Mrs Herbert's servant, enters with a bundle of work, which her mistress has sent to Mrs Cowper.

"When did you hear from Miss Alice?" Mrs Cowper inquired, as Ann took a chair and sat down beside her for a little friendly chat.

RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE.

"Miss Helen heard from her sister yesterday," Ann replied.

"And how is Miss Warrington, Ann? Is there any chance of her getting better?"

"I don't think so; I believe she is in a rapid decline."

"Poor young lady! it must be a dreadful blow to her family," said Mrs Cowper.

"Indeed you may say so, and to Miss Helen too; she was such a friend of hers."

"Yes; they were always together. But, Ann, how came it that it was Miss Alice who went away with Miss Warrington instead of Miss Helen?"

"Why, you see, this was the reason: When Miss Warrington was taken so ill, and thought she was going to die, she was always wanting Miss Alice to be with her; she is so good, you know, and talks so beautifully about heaven and our Saviour; so that when the doctor ordered change of air for Miss Warrington, she did not like at all to leave Miss Alice, and Mrs Warrington asked her to go with them. Poor lady! she is heart-broken; she can't bear to think of her daughter being taken from her. She is not religious, like our dear young lady, and can't speak, as Miss Alice does, about God and the other world, to which Miss Stella is fast going. Miss Alice is like her father. It was he that was the kind, Christian gentleman. It was a sad day for his family when they lost him." At which Mrs Cowper shook her head, as if she assented sorrowfully, and said—

"He was such a good master, too. When I went to live there, some years ago, I was, as you know, Ann, a giddy, thoughtless girl; I seldom said a prayer or ever went to

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church ; but Mr Herbert always had family prayers, which we servants were called to join in, and we were required to attend church regularly. At first, going to church was very irksome to me, but after a while I got to like it, and I even learned to pray, and tried to lead a better life. Master and mistress were both so kind to me ; many a happy hour I spent in their house ; and after I left it, I never forgot what I learned from them, but have striven to live honestly and in the fear of God ever since. What a pity it is, Ann," she continued, "that masters and mistresses don't take more interest than they usually do in their servants ! How much better would they be served ! and how little do they know the effect upon them of a kind word or look !"

"That is true," remarked Ann, thoughtfully. "I can well believe what you say about being happy when you lived with Mrs Herbert. I have been in many a place, but it never was my lot to be as contented in any house as I am with them. You never see a cross look on Mrs Herbert's sweet face, or hear an angry word from her lips. Mr Harry, too, is as fine a young gentleman as you would meet anywhere,—so polite and considerate ; and as for Miss Alice !—Well, if ever I get to heaven," she added, seriously, "it is she I will have to thank for having led me first to think of it, and to wish to be good. It is true that I am not so fond of Miss Helen as the rest of the family ; but lately a change for the better, I trust, has come over her. She has not been like herself at all. She stays more at home, and is quieter and kinder like. I think she frets about her friend Miss Warrington."

RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE.

"Very likely," Mrs Cowper answered. "Many a time last winter did I notice Miss Warrington passing here in their grand sleigh, looking so handsome and gay ; and now to think that she is dying ! All her father's wealth can't save her, his only daughter, from the dread grave, where the rich and the poor lie down at length together."






CHAPTER IX.

Serious Thoughts.

Draw me, O my gracious Lord,
With a kind and powerful cord ;
Fix my heart and hopes above
With Thy tender bands of love.

Y dear," said Mrs Herbert, addressing her daughter Helen, on her return one afternoon from school, "I have received a letter from Alice, and here is one for you from Stella."

Helen took the letter from her mamma, and went up-stairs with it to her room. Laying aside her books and hat, she sat down and opened it, and began to read. It was the first letter she had received from Stella since she had left home. We will take the liberty of looking over her shoulder, and reading it with her.

"DEAREST HELEN,—I am still very ill, and I suffer a good deal at times. I do not think there is much chance of my ever getting better ; but my

SERIOUS THOUGHTS.

life is in God's hands, to do with it as it seems good to Him. He knows what is best for me. I should like, if it is His will, to live longer, for the sake of those who love me, and would grieve at my loss ; and that I might try to do something for His glory before I am taken away. But if it is not to be, and my days are numbered, I am not unwilling to die ; for I look to the blessed Saviour, who suffered and died on the cross for us, and trust that He will have mercy upon me, His poor sinful child, and forgive my sins, and take me to Himself. Dear Helen, this is my birthday. Shall I ever live to see another ? I am fifteen years old to-day. I daresay you remember how I used to look forward to it, thinking of the handsome presents I expected, and of the gay party my dear kind parents always gave me, in honour of it. Think of me now, away from my home, so weak and ill ; my good looks, which it pleased me to hear praised, all gone from me, and my fine clothes and pretty ornaments, which I took such pride in, cast aside as valueless. I have been a very vain, foolish, thoughtless girl, living as if this life was to last for ever. Ah, Helen ! my dear friend, take warning by me. Think how uncertain life is, and turn your thoughts and affections to Jesus,—love Him, pray to Him, and try to please Him, as your sister Alice does ; and then you will be happy, not only now, but through eternity. I cannot write any more, for I am very tired.—Your affectionate friend,

STELLA."

"Poor Stella!" muttered Helen ; "how sad it is to think that she may die so soon !" And she folded up the letter, and threw herself back, leaning her head thoughtfully on

SERIOUS THOUGHTS.

her hand. "My turn may come next. Stella hoped that she might have a long time to live, as I do. I, too, may be called away while I am young ; and I am not prepared to die. Ah ! I wish I were good, like Alice ; then I would not be afraid if death should come. I will try to lead a better life. I will pray to God to enable me to love and serve Him." And that moment Helen knelt down, and, in the silence of her quiet chamber, prayed earnestly to God that He would, for Jesus' sake, forgive her sins, subdue her stubborn heart, and grant her the aid of His Holy Spirit, so that she might lead a new and holier life. And the Lord heard her ; for is it not said, "Thou shalt make thy prayer unto Him, and He shall hear thee" ?

"Here, Helen," said Ida Lorme, as Helen was leaving the schoolroom the next afternoon, "here is the book I promised you—'Flora ; or, Self-Deception.' It is such a pretty story."

"Thank you, Ida," replied Helen. "I was wishing so much I had something to read this afternoon." And Helen took the book, and hurried home, so that she might sit down and enjoy it, for she was passionately fond of reading.

On entering the house she was met by Eva, who exclaimed, "Ah, Helen ! I have been anxiously watching for you."

"What for, Eva ?" asked her sister.

"Look here, what I have got !" And she held up a handsome china-doll. "Harry brought it to me at dinner-time."

SERIOUS THOUGHTS.

"It is very pretty, indeed, Eva, and much larger than your last one."

"Yes, a great deal bigger," answered the child. "Will you come and make a dress for it, Helen?"

"I can't just now," said Helen.

"Oh, do!" pleaded the child, looking entreatingly up into her sister's face. "Mamma is busy. She said you might dress it when you came home from school."

"I have got a nice book, Eva, which I want to read now," said Helen, and turned away.

"I wish Alice was here!" Eva exclaimed, in a disappointed tone; "she would do it, and wait till some other time to read the story."

"That is true," thought Helen. "How selfish and unkind I am! Eva," she said, turning back to her little sister, "bring Dollie up to my room, and I will help you to dress her."

"I am so glad! Now you are good, Helen, like Alice," said the little one, and she kissed her sister. "I will run and get my little trunk, where there are such pretty things, which mamma gave me, to make clothes for it." And the happy child ran away, while Helen proceeded up-stairs.

At the top of the stair she met her mother, who had overheard the conversation between her children.

"That is right, Helen, my dear, to deny yourself the pleasure of reading a book this afternoon to please your sister."

Her mother's approving words and smile, added to Eva's

SERIOUS THOUGHTS.

delight, amply repaid Helen for this, her first effort to overcome her selfishness.

"Be kind to one another :
Scatter the seeds of love
Wide o'er the field of hearts, and rich
The harvest wealth will prove.
A wealth more truly precious
Than aught beneath the sun,
Which India's diamonds could not buy,
And yet—how lightly won."

—A. L. WESTCOMBE.





CHAPTER X.

A Happy Deathbed.

Death, where is thy gloomy prison?
Christ has burst the massy door;
I shall rise, for He is risen.
Fear not; He has gone before.



It is a warm starlight evening in the beginning of June, and Alice is standing at one of the windows of an hotel in the city of Toronto. It is yet early, and the city has not retired to rest. The noisy rolling of carriages, the sound of hurrying footsteps, and the hum of voices, fall confusedly upon her ear in her lonely room; and from the clear, far-off heavens the quiet stars, in all their brilliant beauty, are looking down on the crowded streets, with their bright lights and busy throng.

Old and young, rich and poor, are there. Gay ones seeking pleasure—starving ones, bread—the wicked, their haunts of vice—the wealthy, their princely

A HAPPY DEATHBED.

homes ; but surely all are not so full of the cares of this earth that they cannot look up to those beautiful heavens. Many a glance of wonder and praise must be raised to them, and of longing too, from weary eyes, for there is rest there ; but, alas ! too many pass on without one thought of what is beyond,—without realising that this life, which engrosses all their attention, must end some day. How many have trodden these same streets, whose places are now vacant and their familiar faces no more seen ! Where have they gone ? Have they sought new homes in strange cities ? Many have silent homes in the quiet cities of the dead, where the hurrying of footsteps and the bustle of life is hushed for ever. There silence reigns, and all that tells us that they have lived and passed away is some slab of sculptured marble or lowly wooden cross, while, from above, the same calm stars which they so often gazed on are keeping watch over their lonely graves.

“ 'Tis a blessing to live, but a greater to die ;
And the best of the world is its path to the sky,—
Be it gloomy or bright, for the life that He gave,
Let us thank Him, but blessed be God for the grave !
'Tis the end of our toil, 'tis the crown of our bliss,
'Tis the portal of happiness. Ay, but for this
How hopeless were sorrow, how narrow were love,
If they look'd not from earth to the rapture above ! ”

—J. K. MITCHELL.

“ Ah, dear Stella ! your place on earth will soon be vacant,” Alice murmured, as she sadly thought of her friend lying so wan and wasted in the next apartment, for she knew that her days were numbered, that she was quickly passing from this world. Human skill and love had been powerless in restoring her to health. They are

taking her home to die ; but Stella is not now afraid of death, for she has learned to love her Saviour, and to trust that He will pardon her sins and take her to Himself.

The next day the Warringtons and Alice returned to Hamilton. Stella was very much fatigued by her journey. She was, on her arrival at home, taken to her room, which she never again left, until she was carried out in her coffin.

Alice was glad to get back to the dear ones at home, from whom she had for weeks been absent, and they were as glad to welcome her as she to return, for she was the light of their dwelling, and had been sadly missed.

The next day Helen went to visit Stella. She was greatly startled when she saw the change in her appearance, and could ill repress her heartfelt grief. There was scarcely any resemblance between the wan, hollow-eyed girl she now looked upon, so wasted by disease and suffering, and her gay young companion of the preceding winter.

"Don't cry, dear Helen," said Stella, gently, as Helen, overcome by her feelings, knelt sobbing by her couch.

"Ah ! I can't help it ; you are so ill," was the tearful reply.

"I am dying, Helen," she calmly answered ; "but do not grieve for me ; I am happy now."

"Are you willing to die, Stella?" And Helen, as she asked the question, looked earnestly and inquiringly into her wan face.

"Yes ; I do not fear death now, as I used to do ; for the Lord Jesus has washed away my sins in His precious blood. He has promised to have mercy upon those who come to

A HAPPY DEATHBED.

Him ; and I do believe," she added, looking solemnly upwards, "that I shall see His face, and dwell for ever with Him ! "

" Oh ! it is so hard to go away from all those who love you, Stella."

"That is the only sting which death has for me," she answered, mournfully. "But I hope to meet them again in a better world, where there shall be no more suffering, and we shall part no more. Dear Helen," she continued, earnestly, as she gazed tenderly into her saddened face, "last winter we spent many pleasant hours together ; but after I am gone I do not want you to remember me as I was then—for deeply and with tears do I regret the vain, foolish life I then led, thinking only of this world and its amusements ; but think of me on my deathbed as I now am, the shadow of my former self indeed, yet with the terror of death passed from me, calmly awaiting the end which, sooner or later, must come to you, too, Helen, as to me. Ah ! won't you promise me"—and she clasped Helen's hand fondly, drawing her nearer to her—"that you will seek the blessed Saviour, and follow with Alice His guiding steps, so that we may meet again in that glorious eternal home, where, through God's mercy, I hope so soon to be ?"

"I will try," Helen answered, in subdued, earnest tones. "Dear papa will be there too. I will pray to God to make me good."

One short fortnight from that day, Stella Warrington was lying a corpse in her darkened chamber. It was just as the sun was setting, one beautiful summer evening, that

A HAPPY DEATHBED.

her spirit was summoned to meet her God. Her sufferings for some hours before her death were severe; but when the end came, she passed quietly away in her mother's arms, with the Saviour's name upon her lips.

Her parents' grief was intense. She was their only daughter, and so young, lovely, and beloved; but her death made them think more of heavenly things, and gradually raised their thoughts and affections above the earth to the home in heaven where she awaited them.

"Farewell, then—for a while, farewell—
Pride of our heart;
It cannot be that long we dwell
Thus torn apart:
Time's shadows like the shuttle flee;
And dark howe'er life's night may be,
Beyond the grave we'll meet with thee."

—D. M. MOIN.

Stella Warrington's early death made a deep impression upon Helen Herbert. She did not know how soon her turn to die might come, and she felt she was not prepared for it. But her promise to Stella was not forgotten; and earnestly she besought the Lord to purify her vain, selfish nature, and to enable her to walk in the narrow way that leads to heaven. She often thought of Stella's peaceful death, and prayed that hers might be as assured and happy. Nor were her prayers in vain; for, as the years passed by, she became more like her sister Alice,—kind, gentle, and obliging, fearing and loving God, and striving to do only, and do always, the things that please Him.



CHAPTER XI.

A Sudden Danger.

The rising morning can't assure
That we shall end the day,
For death stands ready at the door
To take our lives away.

ON a clear, bright day in the early autumn, a noble steamer is ploughing its way through the blue waves of the beautiful St Lawrence. The deck is crowded with passengers, enjoying the balmy air and picturesque scenery.

In the almost empty saloon Mrs Herbert is sitting reading. A young lady comes out of one of the state-rooms near and joins her. Although three years have passed since last we saw her, we cannot fail to recognise in the beautiful, graceful girl, Helen Herbert.

"Has the breeze driven you indoors, mamma?" she smilingly asks.

"Yes, dear; it was rather too cold for me; but

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don't you stay here, Helen," she added, as her daughter seated herself near her; "you will find it pleasanter outside."

"I prefer remaining here where it is quiet; besides, I have a good view of the river from this window." And Helen drew some tatting from her pocket and began to work.

Presently one of the passengers, a young girl, who during the day had made acquaintance with Helen, came and sat down beside her.

"We are getting near Prescott," she said. "Are you going on to Montreal?"

"Yes," Helen replied.

"So am I," rejoined her companion. "Do you live in Montreal?" she inquired, after a moment's pause.

"No; I am going there to visit some friends," was Helen's answer.

"And I am going back to school, which I detest. I have had such a gay time at home during the vacation. The dull, moping school-life will be almost unbearable now." And the young girl sighed regretfully.

"I also used to dislike leaving home to go back to school after vacation," replied Helen. And her thoughts flew back to the old home in Guelph before her father's death, which she had always left so reluctantly to return to school in Toronto.

"I should say so. Thank fortune," her companion went on, "I have only another year to remain at school, and then I shall come out, and spend as delightful a time as sister Adelaide does, going to balls and parties, and getting such lots of new dresses and pretty things."

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"And suppose," said Helen, in low, gentle accents, looking very earnestly at the young girl, "that you should not live another year?"

Her companion gazed at her in astonishment. "What makes you say that?" she exclaimed. "Why should I die so soon?"

"Because 'in the midst of life we are in death;' and you seem to have forgotten *that*," Helen replied, gravely. "And the Bible tells us, 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world,' but to 'Set our affections on things above, not on things on the earth,' which can never bring us true happiness or peace."

"Oh! don't talk so," she answered. "I know I am not pious. It makes me quite low-spirited to think of such things." And she arose, and sitting down at the piano, began to play a set of waltzes.

Helen breathed a silent prayer for the worldly-minded girl, that God would have mercy upon her and change her heart.

At Prescott, a plainly-dressed elderly woman, with a little child, came on board. They sat down on one of the couches opposite Helen, who was at once attracted by the child, a fine, bright-looking boy, about three years old; she noticed also what a careworn, troubled look was in the woman's face. Taking some sweets from her satchel, Helen held them out to the little fellow, with a coaxing smile. The child drew back shyly at first, but on being encouraged by the woman to go to "the pretty lady," he went forward and made friends with Helen.

"Is he your child?" she asked the woman.

"No, miss ; he is my daughter's. I am taking the poor child to his mother." And she shook her head and sighed deeply.

"You seem to be in trouble," observed Helen, kindly.

"I am, miss," she replied. And then she told Helen that her grandson had been with her some weeks, but that she was now taking him home to Montreal, where his mother was lying dangerously ill. "I lost a fine son only a year ago," she said, repiningly ; "and now, if she should be taken away from me too, and her babies—for there is another besides this one—left motherless"—

Helen felt very sorry for the distressed woman, and tried, as well as she could, to comfort her, by raising her hopes in regard to the recovery of her daughter.

"I don't expect it," she replied. "Ah ! but this world is full of trouble ; my heart is broken with it. Why was I ever born ?" she murmured, bitterly.

Helen now spoke to her of a happier world, where "sorrow and sighing would flee away ;" but her words failed to bring comfort to the poor woman's anxious heart, for all Helen said seemed to her as an idle tale ; she knew not and loved not the pitying Saviour of whom Helen spoke to her, and never thought of another world, where "the weary are at rest." Ah ! how many, like this poor woman, idly wish, when trouble comes upon them, that they had never been born, or had died when young, so that they might escape the trials and sorrows of life ! little thinking that these are sent by the heavenly Father to draw their thoughts and affections from this earth to Himself. For is it not written, "Whom the Lord loveth

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He chasteneth;" and "though no affliction seem for the present joyous but grievous, nevertheless it worketh out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"? Truly, "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed hereafter."

The day is fading fast, and the evening, fair and calm, begins to hover over the clear waters of Lake St Louis, through which the steamer is now passing. Helen is on deck with her mother, where the rest of the passengers have all gathered to enjoy the beautiful scenery.

Suddenly the awful cry of fire is heard, thrilling every heart with horror. Instantly the gay, careless crowd is transformed into a struggling mass of terrified beings, shrieking for life. Wild alarm is visible on every countenance. "Where is it? where is it?" "O God! we shall be lost!" "Run the steamer ashore!" "Lower the boats immediately!" are the cries which fill the still evening air, as the frantic passengers run distractedly to and fro in their despair.

Helen crept close to her mother's side, and clasping her arms around her, exclaimed, "Oh, mamma! are we to meet such a dreadful fate?"

"Trust in God, my child. He can avert it." And Mrs Herbert added, as she raised her heart in an agony of supplication, "Pray to Him who hath said, 'Call upon me in the time of trouble, and I will deliver you.'"

Helen, too, was calm, though her face grew white and rigid, as though it had been cut in marble. Silently and fervently she called upon the Lord to save them from the

A SUDDEN DANGER.

terrible death which might be theirs, or take them to Himself.

"Shall we be burned to death?" cried the young girl who that day had declared she was not pious, clinging to Helen in an agony of terror.

"I don't know. Pray to the Saviour to pity us," Helen answered. "Our lives are in His hands."

"Ah! must I die?" she exclaimed in despair at the, to her, awful thought.

In less time than I have taken to relate it, the scene I have described occurred; when, to the grateful rejoicing of all those on board, there passed from mouth to mouth, through the steamer, the blessed news that the danger was over—that the fire, which had originated in the hold, was now extinguished.

Oh! what deep joy and thankfulness filled the breasts of the affrighted passengers over their escape from the great peril which, for a moment, that seemed an age, had threatened to overwhelm them; but which now, through the mercy of God, who watches over all His creatures, had been averted.

Two hours later the boat arrived safely at Montreal, and the passengers disembarked, each congratulating the other upon their escape. As Helen Herbert was about to leave the steamer with her mother, the young girl whom we have mentioned before, came up to Helen, and holding out her hand, said, in serious accents,—

"Good-bye, Miss Herbert. How true those words are which you have taught me to-day;—may I never forget them!—'In the midst of life we are in death.' Instead

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of being here, there is not one of us who might not have this very moment been in eternity."

"Yes," replied Helen, as she shook her hand warmly; "the Lord has given us a longer time to prepare to meet Him. Let us take care that we spend it in serving Him."

And now my story is finished. You have seen how calm Helen was in the midst of danger; that death had now no terror for her, because she trusted in the merciful God whom she had learned to love and serve, that He would never leave nor forsake her.

"One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er,
I am nearer home to-day
Than ever I was before ;

"Nearer my Father's house,
Where the many mansions be ;
Nearer the Great White Throne,
Nearer the Crystal Sea ;

"Nearer the bounds of life,
Where we lay our burdens down ;
Nearer leaving the cross,
Nearer gaining the crown.

"But lying darkly between,
Wending down through the night,
Is the dim and unknown stream
That leads me at last to the light.

"Saviour! perfect my trust,
Strengthen the might of my faith ;
Let me feel as I shall when I stand
On the rock of the shore of death,—

"Let me feel as I shall when my feet
Are slipping over the brink,
For it may be I am nearer home,
Nearer now than I think."

—LYRA ANGLICANA.


EMILY'S CHOICE.



CHAPTER I.

The Arrival.

"Whatever brawls disturb the street,
There should be peace at home ;
Where sisters dwell and brothers meet,
Quarrels should never come."

N a handsome parlour in one of the fine houses in — Terrace, Toronto, a bright fire glows cheerfully in the grate, the pretty blue and gold window-curtains are closely drawn, and the table, with its glittering silver, costly china, and various tempting delicacies, is laid for tea.

The room is occupied by a lady and two children. The lady is reclining on a low couch near the fire, carefully shading her face from the heat with a handsome screen. The children—a boy of eight and a girl about twelve—are playing Tivoli.

"There, Eddie; that makes me five hundred ; I've won the game," said Lucia Sutherland to her brother, as she threw down the cue. "

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"No; you haven't; it's not fair!" cried Eddie.

"Yes, it is!" persisted Lucia.

"No, it isn't; you cheated!" returned Eddie, passionately.

"Do be still, children," exclaimed Mrs Sutherland, impatiently; "you make my head ache with your noise."

"He says I cheated, mamma," cried Lucia, in an angry tone.

"So you did!" insisted Eddie. "You did not make five hundred."

"If you don't be quiet, Eddie, I'll send you up to the nursery. What will your cousin Emily think of you, you naughty boy?" said his mother.

"I wish papa would come with cousin; I want to see her," returned Eddie, as he approached the window, and, pushing aside the heavy curtain, looked out into the dark street.

"It is eight o'clock—the train must be in," exclaimed Lucia, impatiently. "Why don't they come?"

"They must be here soon now, unless they have been detained on the way," Mrs Sutherland answered.

"Oh! here's the carriage! here they are!" shouted Eddie, rushing from the window out into the hall.

Lucia, followed by her mamma, also left the parlour. In the hall they were met by Mr Sutherland and a young girl, whom he presented to his wife as his niece Emily. She was older and taller than Lucia, and attired in deep mourning.

Mrs Sutherland received her very kindly; her heart was drawn towards the sweet, sad-looking girl, who had been

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lately left an orphan by the death of her father, who was Mr Sutherland's brother. Lucia and Eddie also came forward and kissed their cousin, who, they had been told, was to live with them now and be their sister.

"Your cloak is a little damp, my dear," remarked Mrs Sutherland; "you had better change it at once. Lucia, take your cousin up to your room."

Lucia Sutherland led her cousin up the wide, handsomely-carpeted staircase, to a spacious bed-chamber, prettily furnished.

"This is to be our room," said Lucia. "You're going to stay with us always, aren't you, cousin?"

"I don't know. Papa said after a year I was to go to Aunt Mary's," was Emily's quiet reply.

"But after that you're coming back here to live with us again. Mamma says you're to go to school with me, and that we are to be like sisters."

"I hope we shall, Lucia. I never had a sister or brother," added her cousin, sorrowfully.

"Well, you'll have Eddie for your brother; but I don't think you'll care much about him."

"Why not, Lucia?" asked Emily, in surprise.

"Oh! he's such a naughty boy," her cousin answered, with a contemptuous toss of her head.

Emily did not answer; she was sorry to hear Lucia speak so unkindly of her little brother.

"How old are you, Emily?" asked Lucia.

"Fourteen last month; two years older than you, uncle told me."

"What lovely hair you have, cousin! Why don't you

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wear a waterfall, instead of braiding it so plainly ? It would look more stylish."

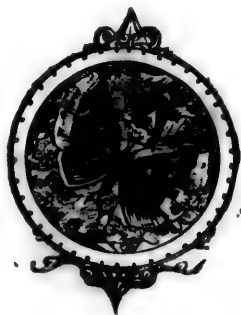
"Papa liked it best this way." And Emily's eyes filled with tears at the remembrance of the fond parent she had so lately lost.

"I wanted to put mine up in a waterfall ; but mamma wouldn't hear of it. Isn't it provoking ?" said Lucia, with an injured air.

Emily looked at her cousin in astonishment. "Your mamma is the best judge, Lucia, how you should dress your hair," she said, reprovingly. "I think those pretty curls of yours look very nice."

"So every one tells me, and that they become me so well." And the little lady gave a self-satisfied glance at herself in the glass.

Emily was now ready to go down-stairs ; so she descended with her cousin to the parlour, where her aunt was waiting tea for them.

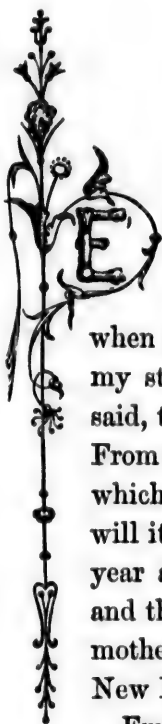




CHAPTER II.

Lucia's Friends.

"Religion is the chief concern
Of mortals here below,
May we its great importance learn—
Its sovereign virtue know."



EMILY SUTHERLAND was the daughter of a clergyman, who had charge of a small parish near Montreal. Her mother died when she was quite a child ; and, a few weeks before my story commences, she had, as I have already said, the misfortune to lose her remaining parent. From her mother, Emily inherited a small fortune, which made her independent ; and by her father's will it was arranged that she was to spend the first year after his death with his brother in Toronto, and the following year with an aunt, a sister of her mother's, who was married, and resided in St John, New Brunswick.

Emily had been religiously brought up by her

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father, who truly loved and served the Master whose minister he professed to be. Her home in the village where she resided with him, had been a very quiet one; and the family consisted only of himself and daughter, and a widow lady who had assisted in educating her. In her new home, her life would be very different from what it had hitherto been, for her uncle was wealthy and lived in good style, while his wife was a gay, fashionable woman of the world.

Emily had not been long in her uncle's family before, to her surprise and sorrow, she perceived that the Lord, whom from her earliest years she had been taught to love and serve, was forgotten in the household;—they seldom went to church, and they never worshipped together round the family altar. Gay, worldly-minded, entirely engrossed with the cares and pleasures of life, they lived in utter forgetfulness of the Divine command, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world;" and never thought of the uncertainty of life, and the account they must each one render hereafter to the God that gave it.

"Emily," cried Lucia, as she entered the room where her cousin was studying her lessons for the next day, "here are Nina and Ada Clinton; they are very intimate friends of mine, and have come to see you. So put down those tiresome books, and come down-stairs to see them."

On entering the drawing-room, Emily was introduced to two richly-dressed girls, about her own and Lucia's age.

"How do you like Toronto, Miss Sutherland?" inquired Nina Clinton, the eldest of her visitors.

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"Very much," replied Emily. "It is the first time I have lived in a city ; so everything is quite new to me."

"Lucia told me that you lived in a small place. I don't think I could exist except in a city," returned the young lady ; "it must be so awfully dull."

"I did not find it so," Emily answered, as her thoughts reverted sadly to the pretty parsonage in the quiet village where she had spent so many happy days.

"Well, I should ; but then I have resided in a city all my life. Mamma says Toronto is going to be very gay this winter. Your mamma," she added, addressing Lucia, "will not, of course, be going out just now."

"No ; and I can't go to any parties either, whilst we are in mourning," said Lucia, regretfully.

"You were not at church yesterday, Lucia," observed Ada Clinton.

"No ; Emily went ; but I did not care about going. I think Sunday is such a tiresome day."

"Ah, Lucia, don't say so," exclaimed Emily.

"Yes, I do, cousin ; it is such a long, stupid day."

"It is the Lord's day, the most holy of all the week," said Emily, seriously.

"Do you like going to church, Miss Sutherland ?" inquired Nina Clinton.

"Yes, I think it is a great and blessed privilege to be able to attend God's house, and join in worshipping and praising Him."

Nina was silent ; she was in the habit of going to church every Sunday ; but she was not actuated by any such considerations as these. To see, and to be seen, and pass the

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time, were unfortunately the only motives which influenced her.

"You know, Nina," remarked Lucia, laughingly, "uncle was a clergyman ; so Emily is dreadfully religious."

"Are you, Miss Sutherland ?" asked Nina. "Then you think, I suppose, that balls and parties and concerts, and all such delightful amusements, are wrong ?"

"They are wrong when they engross too much of our attention, and make us indifferent about heavenly things."

"Wait, Emily, until you've lived with us some time. Mamma will put those queer, strict notions out of your head," said her cousin, in a smiling, confident manner.

"I hope I never may think differently," Emily replied.

"Do you know, Lucia, that Katie Mortimer is going to leave our school ?" observed Ada Clinton.

"Why, Ada ?" asked Lucia, in surprise.

"Because her father has lost a great deal of money lately ; and they will be obliged to leave their handsome house and live very plainly now. Katie will have to go to a less expensive school," she told me yesterday.

"I'm glad of it," was Lucia's unfeeling reply.

"Oh, Lucia !" exclaimed her cousin, "you can't mean what you say. Surely you would not rejoice over the misfortunes of others !"

"Yes, I do, for I don't like Katie ; she is such a conceited girl, and gives herself such airs. You yourself, Emily, said you did not think she was nice."

"I don't like her particularly, Lucia ; but still I'm sorry that she is in trouble."

"I'm sorry too for Katie," remarked Nina. "It will be

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such a great change for her, after the style they've been living in."

"You ought to be glad anyway, Nina, that she is going to leave school," said her sister Ada, "because she wins all the prizes in your class from you."

"She deserves to win them, for she studies much harder than I do," Nina answered, frankly. "However, I am determined to study this winter, and try for some of the prizes at Easter. Papa has promised me a beautiful little gold watch, if I succeed in carrying off two of them."

"Then you'll have to study pretty hard ; for Emily, you know, is in your class ; and she is always at her books," cried Lucia.

"I suppose you're fond of study," said Nina, addressing Emily.

"Yes," she replied ; "dear papa used to assist me with my lessons, and teach me French, and astronomy from the heavens ; but it is so different now." And a sad look came into her face, and her voice faltered. The fashionable school to which she had been sent with Lucia was indeed very different from the quiet hours of pleasant instruction under her father and gentle Mrs Thornton, who had been her governess. "There is no one now," thought Emily, sorrowfully, "to take the same interest in my studies, and help me as they did."

"I'll only have to study the harder," replied Nina, pleasantly.

"Yes ; and not read so many novels," remarked her sister.

"Do you read novels, Miss Clinton ?" inquired Emily, with surprise.

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"Yes, of course ; don't you ?"

"No ; papa would not let me read them. He said I was too young."

"Neither does mamma want me to read them ; but I manage to do so without her knowing it," was the careless, laughing reply.

Emily was shocked at the young girl's disobedience and deceit.

Nina noticed the expression of her face, and said, "You think I'm awfully wicked, don't you, Miss Sutherland ?"

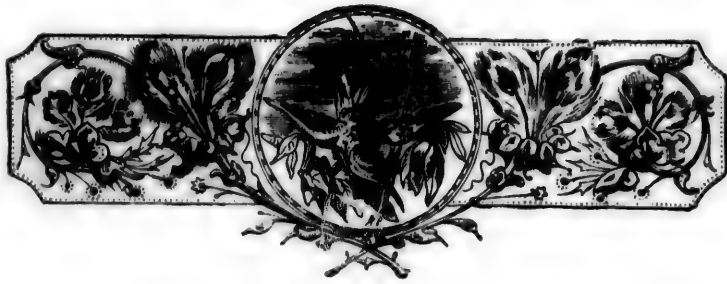
"I think it very sinful to disobey one's parents," Emily replied gently, though firmly. "The Bible tells us plainly that we ought to obey them, and our Blessed Saviour when He was young, set us the example of obedience."

Lucia, who was afraid that her cousin's plain speaking might offend her fashionable young friends, here interposed, saying, "How dreadfully pious you are, Emily, to make such a fuss about a little thing like that !" But, to her astonishment, Nina answered, thoughtfully—

"Your cousin is right, Lucia ; I know that I should not do so."

Just then some visitors, who had called to see Mrs Sutherland, entered the drawing-room ; and shortly afterwards Nina and Ada Clinton went away





CHAPTER III.

The Cousins.

"Behold the great and glorious prize
Which Christ holds out before thine eyes
And in thine onward, heavenward race
Press forward with a quicken'd pace."

THE weeks went by, and Emily in her new home became a favourite with every one; she was so sweet-tempered, kind, and obliging. Her aunt and uncle were always holding her up as a pattern of goodness to their spoiled, wayward daughter—a proceeding, however, of which Miss Lucia did not at all approve; and, indeed, had Emily been less gentle and unassuming, it might have been the means of making Lucia thoroughly dislike her cousin.

Besides Lucia and Eddie, Emily had two younger cousins, with whom she spent many hours in the nursery, her sad heart clinging to them with fond affection. She happened to be playing with them

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there one afternoon; and Eddie was also with her, building houses with some pretty blocks. He had made several attempts at building a tower; but, somehow or other, could not succeed. At length he lost all patience, and gathering up the blocks in a quick, angry manner, was about to throw them one by one into the fire. Emily did not perceive what he was about until her attention was roused by Sarah, the nursery-maid, running to him, and beseechingly exclaiming—

“Oh, Master Eddie! don’t burn your pretty blocks!”

“Yes, I will! I don’t like them!” returned the passionate boy.

“Oh, Miss Emily, please don’t let him!” exclaimed the girl, appealing to her. “It’s such a pity to destroy them.”

“No, it isn’t!” said Eddie; “they are not nice.”

“They are nice blocks, Eddie; and you must not burn them,” said Emily, quietly.

“Yes, I will!” he exclaimed, angrily. “I’ll not play with them again.”

“Please give them to me then, Master Eddie, instead of burning them. Poor Johnnie would be so glad to get them,” said Sarah, eagerly.

“Here, then! Take them for Johnnie; I don’t want them any more.” And Eddie flung them towards her.

“Perhaps your mamma would be angry, though,” said his nurse, hesitating to pick them up.

“No; she won’t. They’re mine; and I can do what I like with them!”

“Do you think I ought to take them, Miss Emily?” said Sarah, as she stooped, waiting her permission.

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"I don't know," Emily answered, with a look of doubt. "Eddie, you had better ask aunt if you may give them away."

"Where is mamma? I'll ask her; but you'll see she'll let me do what I like with them," he exclaimed, as he left the room in search of his mother.

And so it proved; for he soon returned, saying in triumph—"I told you so! Mamma says if I don't want them, I can give them to Sarah."

"Oh, thank you, Master Eddie! Johnnie will be delighted with them." And Sarah began joyfully to gather up the blocks.

"Who is Johnnie?" Emily inquired.

"A little brother that I have, miss. He is just a year older than Master Eddie; but he can't walk—he is a cripple."

"Poor child!" said Emily, in pitying accents.

"It's a sad sight, Miss Emily," continued Sarah, sorrowfully, "to see him day after day lying in his bed or sitting in a little chair. He is not able to move now, or go in and out like other children; and yet he is so good, just as quiet as a lamb, poor little fellow!"

"Suppose, Eddie," said Emily to her cousin, who was standing by listening attentively to what his nurse was saying, "that you could not walk like Sarah's brother, what would you do?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," answered the child, gravely. "Would I have to sit still all day long in this room?"

"Yes; unless some one carried you about like a baby," returned Emily.

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"Then, I'm very glad that I can walk ; that I'm not a cripple like Johnnie !"

"So you ought to be glad, and be a good boy too, Eddie, and not get into such dreadful passions," said his cousin, seriously. "God, who dwells in heaven, is angry with you when you do so."

"Is heaven, where God lives, a nice place, cousin ?" inquired Eddie. "Nobody tells me about it."

"It is a beautiful place, dear Eddie ; its streets are paved with pure gold, and there is a high, bright, glittering wall round it with gates made of pearls."

"Ah ! how splendid that must be !" exclaimed the boy, opening his bright blue eyes in wonder. "I should like so much to go to heaven, cousin !"

"You must try and be a good child then, Eddie. Our Blessed Lord said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

"I think when I read the sweet story o' old,
That when Jesus was here among men,
He called little children as lambs to His fold—
I should like to have been with Him then.
I wish that His hands had been placed on my head,
That His arms had been thrown around me ;
And that I might have seen His kind look when He said,
'Let the little ones come unto me.'

"Yet still to my Saviour in prayer I may go,
And ask for a share in His love ;
I know if I earnestly seek Him below,
I shall see Him and hear Him above,—
In that beautiful place He is gone to prepare
For all those who are wash'd and forgiven ;
And many dear children are gathering there,
'For of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

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"Well, I'll try to be good, cousin Emily, so that I may go to that lovely place." And he looked up trustfully into her earnest face.

And stooping, she kissed him and said, "I hope, indeed, dear Eddie, that you may go there some time. I have got some pretty stories and hymns about little boys and girls who were good, which I will read to you."

"And will you tell me more about heaven, cousin?"

"Yes; and about the holy child Jesus, who once came from and has again returned to heaven," replied Emily.

"Ah! Miss Emily, how you do talk about heaven!" said Sarah; "I never thought it was such a beautiful place!"

"But it is, Sarah, for the Bible tells us so. I know that you can read; have you never read the twenty-first chapter of Revelations?"

"No, miss; I have no Bible," replied the girl.

"Then I will give you one; and you can read it and see what a glorious happy home we shall have there, if we love and serve God while we are in this world."

"Can your brother read, Sarah?" Emily inquired, after a moment's pause.

"No, miss; he can only spell little words. I used to teach him when I was at home; but now, since I went to service, there is no one to do it; for mother can't read. If Johnnie could read, he would not find the day so long and lonesome; and he's so fond of his book, too; he knows the little primer which I gave him by heart."

Emily was deeply touched by the story of poor Johnnie; she thought how long and sad the days must be to the weary crippled child. "Suppose," she said, "I teach him to

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read ; then he could amuse himself. I'll ask aunt if I may do so ; I hope she won't object." And Emily, full of the scheme of instructing Johnnie, spoke to Mrs Sutherland that evening about it.

"What an absurd fancy, my dear Emily !" said her aunt, looking up in astonishment from a fashion-plate, which she had been consulting. "The idea of your going among those kind of people ! How can you, Emily ?"

"I don't mind it," Emily eagerly answered. "Papa used to let me visit among his poor parishioners ; and I taught a class of little children in Sunday-school."

"But it is different now, Emily. You are not expected to do so ; and I must object to your going to their miserable homes," said her aunt, in a decided manner.

"What is it you object to, Fannie ?" said Mr Sutherland, throwing down the newspaper which he had been reading, and looking towards his wife.

"To Emily's being governess to Sarah's dirty little brother," she answered, disdainfully.

"Well, well ; that is a whimsical fancy !" exclaimed her uncle, laughing heartily. But noticing presently the pained, disappointed expression of his niece's face, he added kindly—"Can't he go to school, my dear, instead of you going to teach him ?"

"No, uncle ; he is a cripple. If he could only read, life would not be quite so sad and weary to the poor child ; and I would like so much to teach him, uncle."

"And you would take the trouble of going to his wretched home, and teaching him, Emily !" said her uncle, with a smile of incredulity.

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"Yes, I should like so much to do so,—if you and aunt will allow me."

"Well, Fannie," said Mr Sutherland, addressing his wife, "it would be too bad to disappoint Emily, when she is so dreadfully in earnest about it. If Sarah's family live in a quiet part of the city, I don't see any harm in letting her do as she wishes."

"Very well, if you think so, she may do as she likes about it," rejoined Mrs Sutherland, in an indifferent tone. "Only, I hope, Emily, that you will never take Lucia or Eddie with you."

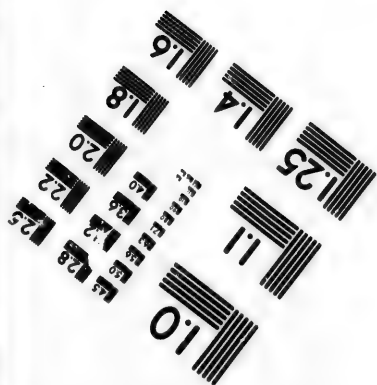
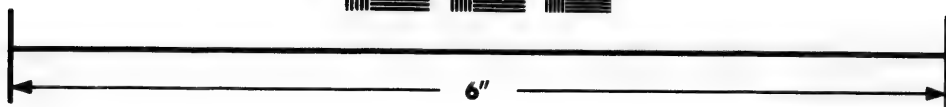
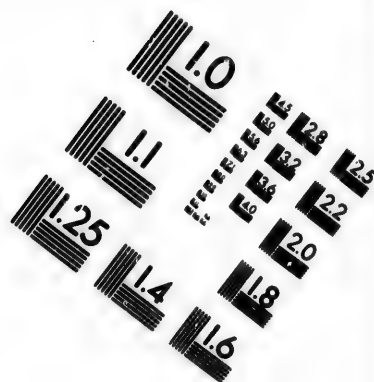
"Certainly not, aunt, if you don't wish it," was Emily's prompt reply, glad to accept any terms in the joy of obtaining her aunt's consent.

"Why, Emily, you look as pleased at the prospect of teaching that stupid youngster, as Lucia would if she were going to a juvenile ball, or had got a new silk dress!" exclaimed her uncle.

Emily smiled; and added with seriousness, "I am happier, uncle, in the permission to do this, than I could be were you to present me with a new dress, and promise me some gay entertainment every day of my life."







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CHAPTER IV.

Emily's Visit to Johnnie.

" Oh glorious, happy place,
There we shall see His face,
Distress and death be o'er,
Sin and the curse no more,
And joys attain which shall not end,
But all our highest thoughts transcend."



WO or three days afterwards, Emily went, to Sarah's delight, to see her brother Johnnie. She found that Sarah's home, though poor, was clean and tidy ; and when she paid her first visit to it, Johnnie, who was a very delicate-looking little boy, was seated beside a table, amusing himself with the blocks that Eddie had given his sister, and which she could see at a glance were a source to the child of inexpressible pleasure.

Emily was at once attracted by the child's pale countenance, and touching, gentle voice. At first, he was very shy, scarcely daring to speak or look up to her ; but Emily's sweet face and kind words soon won the child's heart, and when she produced

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a nice new spelling-book, and asked him if he would like to learn how to read, she had the satisfaction of seeing a bright smile come into his mournful face, while in eager tones he expressed his delight and willingness.

Emily repeated her visit regularly twice a week, and Johnnie proved an apt and diligent scholar. The spelling-book which Emily had brought him, was seldom out of his hands, his mother said ; so anxious was he to learn, that he might be able to read the stories which Emily promised to give him. After teaching him a while, Emily used generally to read to him, and thus gave him a foretaste of the enjoyment he might expect when he could read better. One day she was going to do so, when Johnnie stopped her and timidly asked if she would tell him about the beautiful city in the sky, which, Sarah said, she had been speaking of to Master Eddie.

"Do you mean heaven, Johnnie?" said Emily.

"Yes," he answered. "You said good children would go there."

"So they will, for the Saviour loves children ; and once, when He was on earth, He took them in His arms and blessed them."

"If the Saviour was to take me to Heaven when I die, would I be able to walk there?" he eagerly asked, raising his mournful, dark eyes to Emily's face.

"Yes, Johnnie, you would be as beautiful and bright as an angel then."

"Ah, Miss Emily, if I could only go there!" And the boy's sad earnest tones went to Emily's heart.

"God will surely some day take you to heaven to live

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with Him, if you are a good patient child. Do you pray to God, Johnnie?" she asked.

"Ah! yes, every day; and I pray to Jesus, who, you said, loved us so much that He let the wicked men nail Him to the cross so that we might be saved. He is in heaven, too, isn't He?" the child anxiously inquired.

"Yes; the Lord Jesus, our dear Saviour, is there; and ever so many bright angels are in God's beautiful city."

"What do the angels do all the time?" he asked.

"They are clad in robes of white with crowns of gold on their heads, and they stand around God's throne, worshipping Him and serving Him day and night. Oh! they are so happy there! No one feels hungry or thirsty; and there is no sorrow or crying, nor any more pain in heaven. God wipes away all tears from the eyes of His suffering, weary children, and will live with them for ever. There is beautiful music in heaven, too, Johnnie; and there shall be no night there. They need no candle or sun or moon to shine in that holy city, for the Lord God giveth them light."

With his hands clasped, Johnnie eagerly listened to Emily's words. Presently his eyes filled with tears, which began to trickle unchecked down his cheeks.

"Why do you cry, Johnnie?" Emily asked, perceiving his emotion.

"Oh! I'm so glad there is such a beautiful, happy place; that I won't have to be here for ever, a poor crippled boy! Ah! Miss Emily, do you think that God will take me there?"

"Yes, Johnnie; if you love Him, He will take you to that eternal city where you will be able to walk about its

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golden streets, with the white-robed multitude whose sins Jesus has washed away with His precious blood."

"Then I won't be sorry any more, or cry, as I do sometimes, because I have to sit in this room all day ; but I will think of what you have told me about heaven, and pray to God to take me there soon."

As Emily looked at his wan face, and wasted, shrunken form, she thought that it might not be very long before his prayer would be granted.

Oh ! if those whose lives have become a burden to them through sorrow or sickness, would only remember, as from their chamber of suffering they look out upon a world without sympathy and without help, that every weary day and anguished night is known to their Saviour, what a relief and comfort the thought would bring to their heavy hearts ! He can pity them, for has He not suffered as never man suffered, and all for them ? And He is only waiting until they have been made perfect through suffering to take them to be with Him, where there shall be no more pain, but endless peace and joy. Whatever may be their sorrows or trials, they will soon be ended. A few years at the furthest, and then the voice of mourning shall be hushed, and the sad throbbings of their heart stilled.

"To him whose soul through this tempestuous road
Has past and found its home, its heaven, its God,
Who sees the boundless page of knowledge spread,
And years as boundless rolling o'er his head ;
No cloud to darken the celestial light ;
No sin to sully, and no grief to blight—
Is not that better life a glorious thing ?"

Time passed on. Emily had now been more than six

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months an inmate of her uncle's house, and it was near Easter, when the examinations were to take place at school. She had paid great attention to her studies. Nina Clinton, naturally a clever, though indolent girl, had also studied hard, stimulated by the hope of the reward promised her by her father. Indeed, she and Emily were the best scholars in their class, now that Katie Mortimer, her old rival, had left.

"Emily," said Lucia, one day to her cousin, "I met Katie Mortimer this afternoon."

"Indeed! I have not seen her since she left school," returned Emily.

"Nor I either, until this afternoon, when she happened to come into the store where mamma and I were shopping. You remember, Emily, how fine she used to dress! Well, to-day she looked quite shabby; she had on just the same clothes she used to wear last winter. She bowed to me; but I did not pretend to see her. She knew, of course, that I intended it as a cut, for her face flushed, and she passed quickly on."

"Oh, Lucia! how could you do so?" exclaimed Emily, reproachfully.

"Why, that is nothing! All the girls I know will drop her acquaintance now," replied her cousin.

"Because her father has been unfortunate, and they have become poor?" asked Emily, in a tone of rebuke.

"Yes, of course. She will be no longer in society, you see. No one seems to know what has become of them since they left their fine house."

"Poor Katie, how I pity her! She must be deeply

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pained by such treatment from those she used to consider her friends. I am so sorry that you, Lucia, have followed their example and treated her unkindly."

"What a queer girl you are, Emily!" replied her cousin. "Didn't I tell you that she will not be in our set now? And I'm not going to make a companion of her any more."

"Oh, Lucia! pride is very displeasing to the Lord. The Bible tells us—'An high look and proud heart is sin,' and that 'God beholdeth the proud afar off.'"

"What makes you look so serious, Emily?" inquired Mrs Sutherland, as she entered the room where her daughter and niece were sitting.

"Oh! I've horrified her, mamma," said Lucia, laughing, "because I told her I cut Katie Mortimer this afternoon."

Her mother smiled.

"I daresay you shock your cousin pretty often, my dear. You have such strange notions about some things, Emily," said her aunt. "I don't see anything so dreadful in Lucia's conduct; nobody will notice the Mortimers now. When you have seen a little more of society, I do hope, Emily, you will change your opinion about things in general."

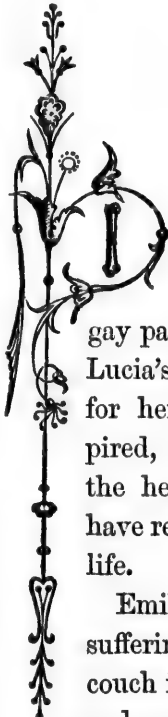
"I hope," thought Emily, "I never may forget what dear good papa taught me, but live as he would wish me to live all my life."



CHAPTER V.

Patience under Suffering.


" All my times shall ever be
Order'd by Thy wise decree,—
Times of sickness, times of health,
Times of penury and wealth,
Times of trial and of grief,
Times of triumph and relief."



It is the beginning of April, and a night in Easter week. Mr Sutherland's handsome drawing-room is brilliantly lighted, and a gay party of young people assembled in it, for it is Lucia's birthnight; and, as the time for mourning for her uncle prescribed by the world has expired, Lucia, as well as her mother, are attired in the height of the fashion, and are understood to have re-entered the longed-for gaieties of fashionable life.

Emily is not in the drawing-room. She has been suffering all day from neuralgia, and is lying on a couch in her bedroom. The sound of merry voices and music comes to her from the parlours below;

PATIENCE UNDER SUFFERING.



but she does not regret that she cannot join the gay party. Her heart is oppressed with a sense of loneliness and sadness, as memory brings back thoughts of the last Easter-tide, which she had spent so happily with her dear father.

"This night," she said to herself, with a sigh, "this Monday night, last year, I spent by his side in our quiet little parlour at the parsonage. How well I remember it! Mrs Thornton had gone to take tea with a friend, and papa and I were alone. He talked to me about mamma, and spoke with rapture of the fond anticipation of meeting her some time in heaven. He spoke also of the glorious resurrection of those who die in the Lord. And for eight long months his spirit has been with God; and here am I left alone."

Alone! what pathos does that little word express! and of how many does it describe the touching situation! Alone! the chill night-winds catch the cry from the pallid lips of the outcast and homeless, as he wanders, hunger-stricken, along the highways and byways of our crowded cities.

Alone! from the distant prairies and trackless deserts the cry rises to the still heavens from many a weary heart. Alone! it is the anguished wail of the grief-stricken mourner, as he turns away from the grave where has been laid to rest some loved one, without whom life will now be a weariness—a burden. In the crowded city as well as on the lonely deep, it is the ceaseless moan of many a heart, though God only hears it.

Emily wept some bitter tears in her loneliness and sorrow, and then she endeavoured to repress her grief, and comfort herself, as David did of old, when he mourned his

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dead, with the thought, "Though he cannot return to me, I may go to him;" and she prayed to the Saviour that He would through life guide her steps in the strait and narrow way which leads to His kingdom.

Presently Nina, who had become much attached to Emily, came up-stairs to see her, and to show her the tiny little watch which her father had given her as a reward for having carried off two of the five prizes in her class, of which Emily had gained the other three.

"You must feel lonely, Emily, lying here so quietly. Let me remain a while with you," said Nina, as she entered her friend's apartment.

"Ah! no, you must not stay up here with me, instead of enjoying yourself with the others; but if you will come to-morrow, or next day, I shall be very glad indeed of your company as long as you like, dear Nina."

"Very well, I will come to-morrow afternoon, for I know that Lucia is going to spend the day with Ada," Nina replied, as, after a few inquiries about her health, and kissing her affectionately, she again returned to the merry party below.

But when the next day came Emily was worse, and for many long weary days she lay in her darkened chamber, suffering from a low intermittent fever.

May came with its bright warm days, yet Emily was unable to leave her room; and though she was getting better, still she remained very weak, and could only sit up for a short time daily.

"I declare, Emily," Lucia exclaimed one morning, "it is too bad to see you lying there, looking so pale and thin,

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this lovely day, instead of being able to go out with me and enjoy this nice spring weather."

"It is God who has sent me this illness, Lucia; and I must try and bear it patiently."

"So you are bearing it patiently. I never saw any one so quiet as you are. If I were in your place, I should be sulking and complaining all the time."

"That would be wrong, dear cousin," said Emily, gently. "When it is the Lord's pleasure to send us sickness, we should not murmur."

"I could not help it," Lucia answered, "if I were shut up in this room, as you have been for weeks. Aren't you very tired of it, Emily?"

"Yes, I should like to be well again. The bright sunshine out there"—and Emily looked longingly towards the window—"looks very inviting; still, though I have been so sick, I have many blessings to be thankful for."

"Blessings to be thankful for!" Lucia repeated, in surprise.

"What are they, Emily?"

"Why, have I not kind friends to nurse me in my illness, and every comfort and luxury I can desire, Lucia, instead of being, as many poor creatures are, surrounded by want and misery, and often suffering besides from unfeeling neglect."

"Oh, is that what you meant?" said Lucia.

"Yes, I have heard dear papa speak of what the poor often suffer in illness, from the want of proper nourishment and care; and I have seen something of it myself, for I used frequently to visit papa's poor parishioners when in sickness."

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"I should not like to go into their miserable dirty houses," replied her cousin.

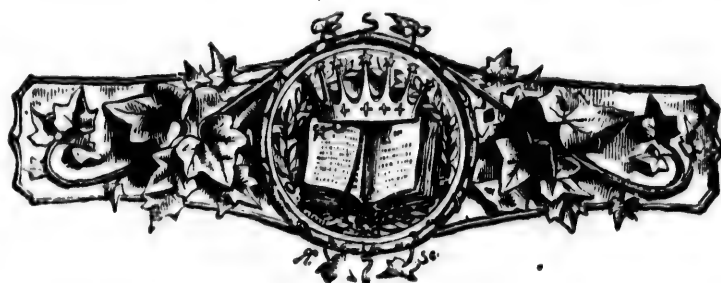
"The Lord has told us to visit and relieve them. O Lucia ; do not despise the poor. The ' Lord is their Maker,' and hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him ? Our Blessed Saviour's parents, too, were poor, and in a humble station."

"It is no use talking," said her cousin. " You know, Emily, we never think the same about anything." And drawing on her gloves, Lucia left the room for her walk.

It was true what Lucia said. The cousins could not think the same, for the one was gay, vain, and careless, giving no thought or attention to her soul's salvation or the life to come ; while the other was serious and meditative, loving and serving the Saviour who died for her, and rejoicing in the hope of a blessed immortality.

When Emily was able to go out again, one of her first visits was paid to Johnnie, who, Sarah had told her, was very much grieved at her illness. Her visits to him had been balm and sunshine to the poor child's life ; he had sadly missed her kind smile and cheering counsels ; and Emily fancied that he looked thinner and paler, and much feebler than when she had last seen him.






CHAPTER VI.

A Happy Death.

"There sin shall never more annoy,
Tears shall be chased by smiles of joy,
Prayer end in praise, hope in delight,
And faith be changed to perfect sight."



THE summer wore away, and Emily began to prepare to leave her uncle's house—the year she was to spend with him, according to her father's will, being nearly ended. In three weeks, she would leave Toronto for her aunt's home in St John, New Brunswick.

Emily was sorry to leave her uncle's family, for they had been extremely kind to her, and she knew not how she would like her other relations. It grieved her to part from her generous, warm-hearted uncle, and sweet little cousins, who had become so dear to her. Eddie was loud in his expressions of sorrow at the idea of cousin Emily going away

A HAPPY DEATH.

from them. He had learned to love her better than his sister Lucia, for Emily was always kind and gentle to him ; it was to her he came when he was in any trouble ; and she sympathised in all his difficulties and little griefs, and was ever willing to play with and amuse him.

In her uncle's house, she had been as happy as it was possible she could have been with any who did not love and fear her Blessed Lord and Master. Oh ! how often she was pained by their indifference to heavenly things, and how frequently and earnestly did she pray that God would have mercy upon them, and, before it was too late, enlighten their eyes, lest they slept the sleep of death !

"What is the matter, Sarah?" said Emily, as she entered the nursery late one evening to give her usual good-night kiss to her sleeping pets. "Is Johnnie worse to-night?" she asked—for she perceived that Sarah had been crying.

"Yes, miss ;" and Sarah's grief burst forth anew. "You know he has been wasting away, growing weaker every day this summer. The doctor saw him this morning, and he does not think he will live longer than a few days now."

"It will be a happy release for him, Sarah," said Emily. "Just think of the poor little fellow's sufferings—how feeble and helpless he is ! and even when he was better, remember how wearisome life was to him !"

"I know, miss, it will be well for him to go, yet I can't help fretting about it. To think that he will be put in the dark lonesome grave !" And the fond sister wept bitterly at the dreadful thought.

"Don't think of that, Sarah," Emily replied, her eyes

A HAPPY DEATH.

filling with tears of sympathy for Sarah's distress ; "think of your brother happy in heaven, released from all pain and sorrow."

"I'll try to ; but oh, it's hard to part with him ; he was always such a good, patient boy. He used often to fret, Miss Emily, about your going away, for he loves the very ground you walk on ; but it need not have troubled him, for he will be gone before you."

"Does he know that he is going to die so soon ?" Emily inquired.

"No, miss ; he doesn't know that death is so near. Mother didn't tell him ; she said she wished you would."

"I intend going to see him to-morrow, and I will do so. He will, I am sure, be glad of it ; so try, Sarah, not to grieve for him."

The next day Emily went, as she had promised, to see Johnnie. On the bed beside him, in the small low room where the poor boy had spent nearly all the long, bright summer days, lay a book of Bible stories, suitable for children, which Emily had given him when he had learned to read a little. She took it up and asked if he had been reading.

"I was trying to, but it hurt my eyes, and made me so tired," Johnnie replied, in a weary tone.

"Shall I read to you ?" said Emily.

"Yes, please," he eagerly answered. "Will you read about Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead ?"

Emily did so ; and then, putting down the book, said—

"You love the Lord Jesus, don't you, Johnnie ?"

"Oh, yes ; so much ! He is so good and kind !"

A HAPPY DEATH.

"Then wouldn't you like to go to heaven, and live with the dear Saviour?"

Johnnie gazed at her very earnestly.

"Am I going to die soon?" he asked.

Emily took his thin, wasted hand gently in hers, and, after a pause, she answered softly—

"Yes, Johnnie; I think the Saviour will very soon now send one of His bright angels to take you to His home. You are not afraid to die, are you, Johnnie?"

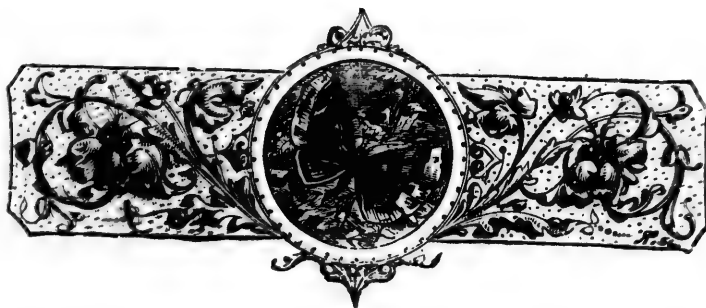
"Oh, no;" and the eyes of the dying boy grew bright, and a flush came into his wan face. "I want to go to heaven and see the Saviour, and walk about the beautiful shining streets of His city, with the holy angels, who are clad in white; I shall be so happy there. But, Miss Emily,"—and his voice sank into a mournful whisper—"I will have to leave poor mother and Sarah behind."

"They will follow you, I trust, Johnnie; after a few years, you may meet them again in heaven."

"Oh, I hope so!" he exclaimed, earnestly; "for I love them, and want them to be happy for ever with me; and you too, Miss Emily, will come there some day."

"God grant that I may," said Emily, with solemn earnestness.

The next time Emily called to see Johnnie, which was two days afterwards, he lay in the same little room where he had suffered so much. But this time she found that the spirit of the poor cripple boy had gone to the Saviour he so loved—to the heavenly home he had so longed for.



CHAPTER VII.

Nellie Grant.

" Help us to help each other, Lord,
Each other's cross to bear ;
Let each his friendly aid afford,
And feel his brother's care."

IN a poorly-furnished room of a small house in one of the alleys of St John, New Brunswick, a little girl, about ten years of age, is sitting on a low bench before the fire. .

"How I wish mother would come home!" she exclaims aloud, in an impatient tone; "I'm so lonesome, and it is getting so dark!"

At length, rising from her seat, she goes to the window and looks wistfully out. The shades of night are gathering fast in the alley into which she gazes, and rain is falling heavily.

"Poor mother! she will get wet. I will make up the fire to warm her, and see about supper." And the child turned away from the window, and

began industriously to make every preparation for her mother's comfort, against her return home in so dismal an evening.

After stirring up the fire, she took down from a shelf an old tin candlestick, in which was stuck a piece of tallow candle, and, lighting it, placed it upon the table, where she also laid two cups and plates, a knife, half a loaf of bread, and a plate containing some butter.

"Mother said she would get paid to-night, and that she would bring home some tea and sugar. Oh, I hope she will come soon now!" And the little girl went back to her bench by the fire, where she sat watching the kettle as it began slowly to boil, and listened anxiously for the sound of her mother's footsteps.

Before long her well-known rap came to the door, and the child ran eagerly to open it. The woman who entered was meanly-dressed, wet, and tired-looking; yet her appearance in that poor, dimly-lighted room, transformed it, on the instant, in the eyes of the loving, solitary child, into a bright abode of happiness and content.

"Ah, mother! you are so wet; come to the fire and dry your clothes. See," she continued, "I have made the kettle boil and got the supper ready, so you can just sit down and rest; you are tired, I know."

"Yes, child, indeed I am; I've had a hard day's washing. You are a good girl, Susie, to have everything so nice and tidy." And the mother looked around the room, with a smile on her pleasant face, which filled Susie with delight.

"Did the lady pay you the money, mother?" she asked, anxiously.

"Yes, honey ; she has at last. She forgot it, she said ; and I in such need of it, too ! I've got the tea and sugar here." And, diving into her pocket, she produced two packages and a large apple.

"Here, Susie, is a beautiful apple, which a kind missy in the house where I was washing gave me to take home to my little girl ; and here is a tart which I saved from my dinner for you," and, thrusting her hand again into the capacious pocket, she brought forth a raspberry tart, carefully wrapped up in paper.

"Oh, how nice, mother !" The poor child took them gratefully from her mother's hands, and after handling them fondly, immediately set about dividing them, intending, in the unselfishness of her heart, to share with her mother.

"No, dearie," her mother said, for she quickly read her intention ; "I will not take a bit of them. You have had nothing to eat to-day, except some bread and butter ; I have had a good dinner where I was working. Sit down now, and eat them while I make a cup of tea."

Their frugal meal was over, and Susie's mother was patching, by the aid of the candle-light, an old dress for the next day's wear ; while Susie was sitting close beside her, listening attentively to her account of the nice little lady at the grand house where she had been working that day, and how she had come into the kitchen so prettily dressed, and carrying a beautiful wax-doll as big as a real baby, with such handsome clothes on it—when they were interrupted by a low, timid knock at the door.

On opening it, the slight figure of a young girl stood

before it, her sole dress a dirty ragged petticoat and a cotton gown, the skirts of which she had, for want of a cap or bonnet, thrown over her head as a protection from the rain.

"Will you let me in, Mrs Brown?" she asked, in a piteous tone.

"Is that you, Nellie Grant? Come in at once out of the wet." And the kind-hearted woman drew the girl into the room, fastening the door behind her.

Nellie sank on a seat near the door, and covering her face with her hands, began to sob aloud.

"Don't take on so badly, Nellie," said Mrs Brown, kindly. "What is the matter?"

"They have turned me out of the house," answered Nellie, lifting up her face, white with anger and excitement.

"Turned you out in such a night as this, child?"

"Yes, Mrs Brown. Ann has been quarrelling with me all day; and to-night, when father came home drunk, he took her part, and put me out of the house. Oh! how, how I hate her!" Nellie continued, fiercely. "She was mad with me because I would not call her mother as Willie does; but she's not my mother, and I shan't call her so as long as I live. I wish that I was dead now." And the girl buried her face in her hands, and wept bitterly.

"You mustn't say that, child; it is very wicked."

"I can't help wishing it," answered Nellie, despairingly. "No one cares for me, and I have no home now. Why should I care to live?"

"But, Nellie, are you fit to meet God?" asked Mrs

Brown, seriously, laying her hand on the young girl's shoulder.

Nellie was silent. She knew that she was afraid to meet that dread Being, who, she had heard, lived in heaven, and who would punish those who were wicked ; but beyond that, the poor girl, brought up in a home of sin and poverty, knew nothing. She was ignorant of all that described Him as the merciful Father, "who so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

"Mother," said Susie, who had been a silent witness of this scene, "can't poor Nellie stay with us to-night?"

"To be sure she can, child. Have you had any supper, Nellie?" inquired Mrs Brown.

"No, ma'am ; Ann would not give me any."

"Go near the fire and warm yourself," said Mrs Brown, as she went to a small cupboard which stood in a corner of the room, and brought out some bread and butter. Preparing a thick slice, she handed it to Nellie, who had seated herself by the stove.

"How old are you, Nellie?" she asked.

"Thirteen years, ma'am, last month."

"Would you like to go to service, if I could get you a place?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am ; I wish I could get some one to hire me," said Nellie, eagerly, her face brightening at the thought. "I won't go home again, even if father, when he gets sober, should ask me."

"It is better for you," answered Mrs Brown, "to try and

NELLIE GRANT.

get a place, where, if you behave yourself, you will have a good home, and earn wages to procure clothes for yourself."

"I would try and be a good girl, and work hard if I were at service; but I've no decent clothes to wear;" and Nellie's face grew sad and clouded again.

"Never mind, Nellie," said Mrs Brown, hopefully. "I know some kind ladies who will, I think, give you some clothes, if I can manage to get a place for you. I'll try to-morrow,—if I am spared to see it," she added, gravely, —"what I can do for you."



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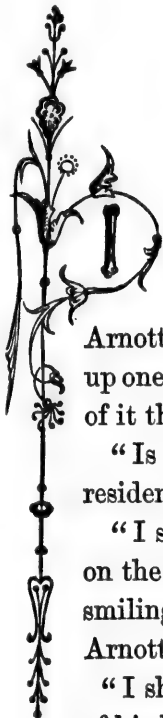
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CHAPTER VIII.

A New Home.

"Thrice happy souls, who, born of heaven,
While yet they sojourn here,
Humbly begin their days with God,
And spend them in His fear."



IN one of the streets of St John there stood a plain-looking two-storey house, with a plate on the door, which bore the name of Dr Arnott. It was before this residence that a cab drew up one afternoon in the month of September, and out of it there stepped Emily Sutherland and her uncle.

"Is it possible, Emily, that this is your aunt's residence?" Mr Sutherland exclaimed, in surprise.

"I suppose so, uncle; there is the name 'Arnott' on the door. It is not so fine as yours," she added, smiling; "but I did not expect that, for I know Dr Arnott is not wealthy."

"I should think not, judging from the appearance of his house, if this be it."

On alighting from the cab and ringing the bell, a servant appeared, who, after showing them into the parlour, went to Mrs Arnott to apprise her of their arrival.

Mr Sutherland surveyed the plainly-furnished room, so different from his elegant apartments at home, and then turning to Emily, said, "I'm afraid, my dear, you will not be very comfortable here for the next year."

Before his niece had time to reply, Mrs Arnott entered the room. She was a sweet-looking lady, with soft-brown hair and eyes, and attired in a style that was neat, though simple.

Emily recognised at once the likeness between her and a portrait of her mother which she possessed, for Mrs Arnott was, as has been stated, Emily's mother's sister; and when she folded Emily tenderly in her arms, exclaiming in a voice of deep emotion, "Oh, my dear child, how like your poor mother you are!" Emily was much affected, and thought it would not be very hard to learn to love one whose eyes were so like those which looked on her from her mother's picture.

After Mr Sutherland had left them, to return in the evening—which he had, on Mrs Arnott's invitation, promised to spend with them—Emily was led by her aunt upstairs to the room which had been prepared for her. It was like the parlour, simply furnished, but looked very neat and inviting. On the stairs they encountered a pretty, curly-headed little girl of about five years, whom Mrs Arnott introduced as her youngest child, Gracie.

Emily was delighted with her little cousin.

"I shall have some one to pet here, as I had at Uncle

A NEW HOME.

Sutherland's," she said to her aunt; and pushing back the bright curls from Gracie's face, she kissed her fondly.

As Emily was very much tired after her long journey, her aunt made her lie down.

"If you could sleep for an hour or two, my dear, you would feel refreshed for the evening. I will call you when tea is ready." And, leading Gracie from the apartment, Mrs Arnott closed the door, leaving her niece to rest for a while.

Emily soon fell asleep, for she was very weary. The evening shadows were darkening her chamber when she awoke. Rising hastily, she began her toilet; and her aunt soon entered the room to tell her it was near their tea hour.

"How tall you are, Emily!" she exclaimed, as she stood watching her niece. "I have often thought of and prayed for you, my dear, and longed so much to see you. Your mother was my only sister—you are very dear to me, my child." And her aunt gazed with loving eyes on the fair young girl beside her.

"I don't remember mamma," said Emily; "but from her picture, and what papa has told me of her, she must have been like you, Aunt Mary."

"Yes; we were said to resemble each other, and you are so like what she was at your age, Emily; and the name, too, is the same."

"Is Gracie your only daughter, aunt?"

"Yes, the only one living; but I have one in heaven, a lovely babe, which God took to His own bright home two years ago," Mrs Arnott answered, in gentle accents of calm

resignation. "I have two boys, who are older than Gracie—they are waiting very impatiently down-stairs to see their cousin ; so, if you are ready, Emily, we will join them."

In the parlour, Emily met Dr Arnott and her cousins, Frank and Charlie. Frank was about eleven years old, and Charlie eight. During the evening, Emily could not help noticing how well-behaved and obedient her cousins the Arnotts were ; they presented such a contrast to the children of her Uncle Sutherland.

That night, Emily bade her Uncle Sutherland a sorrowful adieu—he was to leave early in the morning. She accompanied him to the door, and, as he kissed her, he pressed a well-filled purse into her hand.

"Here is some pocket-money, which you will no doubt find use for. I am very sorry to be obliged to leave you here, Emily ; it won't be a pleasant change for you, I fancy ; but it will only be for a year, and then I shall come for you, my dear."

Emily watched him until he was out of sight, and then went sadly back to the parlour. After the family had united in praising and thanking God for His goodness to them during the day, they separated for the night.

During the morning of the next day, as Emily was in her aunt's room, she observed her rolling up some articles of clothing.

"I have just been searching my wardrobe, Emily, to see what I can spare to give to a poor girl that Mrs Brown, my washerwoman, has told me of. She has a drunken father and a stepmother, who make her home very miser-

A NEW HOME.

able. Mrs Brown has got a place for her, and is trying to get some clothes, so that the girl may make a decent appearance when she goes home to her situation."

"I think, Aunt Mary, I can contribute something," said Emily. "How old is she?"

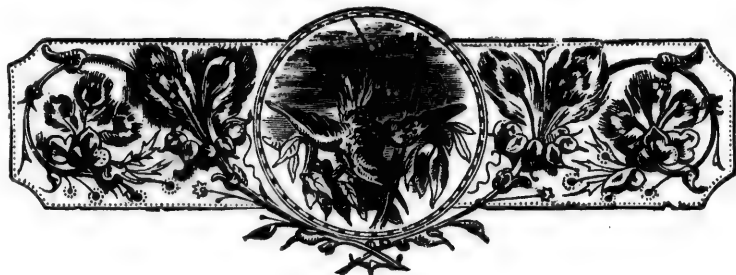
"Mrs Brown said she was thirteen."

"I daresay some of my clothes will fit her. I will see what I can give." And Emily, who was ever ready to do a kind act, or assist those in distress, went to her room, from which she soon returned with a bundle of things.

"Here, Aunt Mary," she eagerly exclaimed, "are two good plain dresses which I used to wear before I went into mourning, and a pair of boots, besides several other articles that I think will do for her."

"They will be very nice indeed, Emily. I am glad to see you so willing, my dear, to help those who are in need;" and Mrs Arnott smiled fondly on her young niece. "'He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord,' we are told, and also that 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

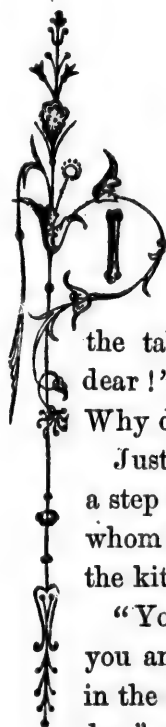




CHAPTER IX.

Nellie at Service.

"Remember thy Creator God,
For Him thy powers employ;
Make Him thy fear, thy love, thy hope,
Thy confidence, thy joy."



It is about ten o'clock at night. In the kitchen of a house near the Arnotts, Nellie Grant is sitting with her head resting wearily on the table, where a small lamp is burning, "Oh, dear!" she exclaims, with a yawn; "I'm so tired. Why doesn't Mrs Berton come down?"

Just at that moment, to Nellie's great satisfaction, a step is heard on the stairs, and Mrs Berton, with whom Nellie has been living for some weeks, enters the kitchen.

"You can go to bed now, Nellie. I won't want you any more to-night; but mind and be early up in the morning, for to-morrow will be a very busy day," she remarked, sharply.

"Yes, ma'am," replied Nellie, as taking up the lamp she followed her mistress up-stairs.

On retiring to her attic room, Nellie soon, according to Mrs Berton's instruction, put out her light and lay down to rest, without offering up a prayer for forgiveness, or for protection during the hours of darkness. "Oh, how my limbs do ache!" she thought; "and it's no wonder—haven't I been kept busy, scrubbing, washing, sweeping, and running about all the long day; and mistress is so cross too: it's nothing but scolding I get; and ain't I trying to do my best? Oh, I wish I was dead! though Mrs Brown says it's wicked to wish it; I'm so miserable, and have been ever since poor mother died." And Nellie thought of the day five years before, when she had looked for the last time on her mother's face. "If she had lived, I would have a home now, and some one to care for me; and father wouldn't, I think, have taken to drink. Oh, if she hadn't died!" and with this vain regretful cry on her lips and in her heart, the wearied girl after a while fell asleep.

Sleep! is it not one of the greatest blessings God has given to us: rest for the sick and weary? To be able for a time to forget all our cares and troubles in peaceful slumber. Those in sorrow often feel an inclination to sleep, which they cannot, or wish not to overcome; for is not unconsciousness to them a blessed relief? Then there are the dreams that come to us while sleeping—Heaven-sent visions, that are given to while away the hours of darkness, and gladden for the time many a sorrowful heart. It is then that our beloved ones who have passed for ever from earth stand beside us. We hear their voices and gaze

NELLIE AT SERVICE.

on their faces ; which never more, except in sleep, we shall see again. The absent are then with us—those for whose presence we have in our waking hours sighed in vain. How real ! how life-like are our dreams ! We love and are beloved—we feel, we laugh, we weep. We behold strange faces, and gaze on beautiful scenery. A refreshing slumber, with pleasant dreams, is, indeed, one of the greatest blessings of life ; and yet, is not our life like a dream ?—it is so fleeting, so full of change. Shall we not look back upon it as such, when we wake from our last sleep in eternity ?

“Night is the time for rest ;
How sweet, when labours close,
To gather round an aching breast
The curtain of repose,
Stretch the tired limbs, and lay the head,
Upon our own delightful bed !

“Night is the time to weep ;
To wet with unseen tears
Those graves of memory where sleep
The joys of other years,—
Hopes that were angels in their birth,
But perish'd young like things on earth !

“Night is the time to pray ;
Our Saviour oft withdrew
To desert mountains far away
So will His followers do—
Steal from the throng to haunts untrod,
And hold communion there with God.

“Night is the time for death ;
When all around is peace,
Calmly to yield the weary breath,
From sin and suffering cease :
Think of heaven's bliss, and give the sign
To parting friends,—such death be mine.”

The days passed on very drearily to poor Nellie, who was not only made to work hard, but had a cross, fault-finding mistress. The only pleasure she had was in going to see Mrs Brown sometimes on Sunday afternoon ; but this did not occur often, for on Sunday the Bertons invariably had company, and Nellie was wanted at home.

Early one Sunday afternoon, however, to Nellie's delight, she was told she might go out until the evening. Nellie was soon ready ; and on her way to her friend's, as she entered the alley where their home was, she perceived her stepmother standing at the door of her untidy house, gossiping with some of her neighbours, who, like herself, lived in utter disregard of the Sabbath, which we have been commanded to keep holy. Nellie did not stop to speak to them, but passed quickly on to Mrs Brown's. Her house, consisting of two rooms, was very clean and tidy, and Susie and herself were preparing to go to church.

"Why, Nellie, is this you?" exclaimed Mrs Brown, in surprise, as she entered.

"Yes, ma'am. Mrs Berton hadn't any company to-day ; so we had dinner early, and she let me go out afterwards."

"You are just in time to go to church with us, Nellie."

"Oh, Mrs Brown, I haven't been to church since I was a little girl and went with poor mother."

"Well, it's time you should begin to go again. Why, you are almost as bad as a heathen!" And Mrs Brown looked pityingly at the young girl.

"But I'm ashamed to go."

"Ashamed! what of, Nellie?"

"Oh ! there are so many grand people there ; I won't know what to do."

"Why, you just have to keep quiet, Nellie," exclaimed Susie, eagerly, "and listen to what the minister says ; and when he prays to God, to kneel down and say the prayers after him."

"And remember," added her mother, "that you are in the Lord's house, where the rich and poor meet together before Him who is the Maker of them all, and who, ' though He is high, hath respect unto the lowly, and will not despise the prayer of the poor.' "

Nellie, though rather reluctantly, consented to accompany them to church, as Mrs Brown wished her to do.

"What a nice book, Susie ! Where did you get it ?" she asked, taking up a neatly-bound volume which was lying on the table.

"That's my Sunday-school book. I go to Sunday-school now, and am in Miss Sutherland's class."

"Miss Sutherland !" repeated Nellie ; "isn't that the young lady, Mrs Brown, who gave you these nice dresses and boots for me ?"

"Yes ; she's Mrs Arnott's niece ; they live near Mrs Berton's."

"I've often seen her passing our door ; she seems such a nice young lady—not a bit proud. I'm so thankful to her for giving me the clothes," Nellie gratefully exclaimed.

"I love her so much," said Susie ; "so do all the girls in our class. Why don't you come to Sunday-school with me, Nellie, and learn how to be a good girl ? Miss Sutherland reads us such beautiful stories about our Saviour every Sunday."

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CHURCH IN ST JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK.

"Nellie was very much impressed with the solemn service of God's house,
and the earnest, eloquent sermon she heard."—Page 109.

NELLIE AT SERVICE.

"Does she? I should like her to teach me. But Mrs Berton wouldn't let me go," Nellie replied, in regretful accents.

"Perhaps she might," Mrs Brown remarked. "You would be back in time for her to go to church."

"She never goes to church on Sunday morning; she has too much cooking to attend to. It's no use thinking about it. I know she will say she can't spare me."

"We'll see, Nellie," observed Mrs Brown. "You ought to be allowed to go to church or Sunday-school every Sunday. If Mrs Berton won't agree to it, I must look out for another place for you. It's not right to spend the Lord's Day just like the other days of the week."

Nellie was very much impressed with the solemn service of God's house, and the earnest, eloquent sermon she heard preached from the text, "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" On her way home she again expressed a desire to attend the Sunday-school belonging to the church, to learn something about heaven, and God, and the blessed Saviour, of whom she had heard that day.

Mrs Brown went to see Mrs Berton, and requested her to allow Nellie to do so; and rather than lose her, for she had found Nellie very smart and tidy, she consented, to the poor girl's delight, to let her go every Sunday morning. Susie called for Nellie on the following Sunday, and Nellie Grant was received into Emily Sutherland's class. She was by far the oldest and biggest girl there; but she humbly took her seat among the little ones, of whom she was the most ignorant.



CHAPTER X.

The Arnotts.

"Blest are the men whose feelings move
And melt with sympathy and love,
From Christ, the Lord, shall they obtain
Like sympathy and love again."

IN the cheerful sitting-room of Dr Arnott's house, the family are gathered. Tea is over, and Dr Arnott, who has been absent from home nearly all day, has put on his slippers and seated himself in his arm-chair with Gracie on his knee, hoping to spend a quiet evening with his family, when a ring at the surgery-bell is heard.

"There is that old bell!" exclaimed Gracie. "I suppose, papa, you will have to go out again."

"Very likely, my pet," replied her father, kissing her as he put her down, and rose reluctantly from his seat.

"I hope not," said his wife, anxiously; "you are so tired, and it is a stormy night."

"It may be only a patient for some medicine," he remarked, as he entered the surgery, which adjoined the sitting-room.

"What a hard life a doctor has!" observed Emily.

"It is one which requires a great deal of self-denial and patience," her aunt replied; "but it is a noble profession. Just think, my dear Emily, how much good a kind physician can do in alleviating the sufferings and misery of his fellow creatures; and, if he is a Christian, what an opportunity he has of guiding his patients to the 'balm in Gilead and the Physician there!'"

"I know that, Aunt Mary; it is indeed a noble profession, though a trying one."

"Wasn't one of our Saviour's disciples a physician?" asked Charlie.

"Yes; St Luke was," replied his mother.

Presently Dr Arnott returned to the apartment.

"Shall you have to go out, my dear?" inquired Mrs Arnott, addressing him.

"Yes, Mary; there is a poor man here who wants me to visit his wife."

"Why don't you send him to some other doctor, papa, instead of going out again this cold stormy night? If he's poor, you will never get anything for it," exclaimed Frank, hastily.

His father looked at him reprovingly. "It grieves me to hear you speak like that, my son. Should I be doing right, if I followed your advice? Did our Blessed Lord, when He was on earth, turn from those who came to Him to be healed when they were poor and wretched?"

THE ARNOTTS.

"Ah! father, I'm sorry I said so. I spoke without thinking," the boy replied, in regretful accents.

"I hope so, Frank. Remember that 'Blessed is the man that provideth for the sick and needy; the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble;' also, 'He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; what he layeth out, it shall be paid him again.'" And Dr Arnott, after protecting himself as best he could against the cold, went cheerfully out on his errand of mercy.

"I wish poor papa wasn't a doctor, and then he wouldn't have to go to see sick people, but could stay at home with us; don't you, Charlie?" said Gracie.

"Yes; and that he had plenty of money, like Mr Croft. I could have a pony then; and you could have a great big doll, Gracie, like Annie Croft's."

"And what would dear mamma have?" his little sister anxiously inquired.

"Oh! she could have lots of silk dresses, and ride in a grand carriage, as Mrs Croft does. Wouldn't you like that, mamma?"

"Like what, Charlie?" his mother asked, for she had not been listening to their conversation.

"Papa to be rich," was his reply.

"I'm very happy, although papa is not rich," replied his mother, smiling.

"But wouldn't you like to have plenty of money, mamma?" Charlie inquired, in surprise.

"Yes; for then I would be able to help those poor sick people who come here every day."

"You do that now, mamma," exclaimed Frank.

"But I could give a great deal more if I was rich, as Charlie says. I could visit them in their miserable homes, and help them in many ways which I cannot afford to do now."

"How different dear Aunt Mary is from Aunt Sutherland!" thought Emily. "She had plenty of money; but how little of it she spent in relieving the wants of the poor! She even shrunk from coming in contact with them. Aunt Mary and Uncle Arnott are Christians, like dear papa; and I am sure it is with them he would wish me to remain. I have been so happy since I came here, so much happier and more contented than in uncle's fine house in Toronto, where nobody thought or cared about those things which interested me."

Among the young ladies at the school which Emily attended, there was one named Clara Douglas. Her parents had gone to France on account of her mother's health, leaving her at a boarding-school. Not long after their departure, she was taken seriously ill. Dr Arnott, who was an old friend of her family, attended her; and, thinking it best, removed her when she began to recover a little to his own house, where she could have the care and attention that she, in her weak, nervous state, required for many weeks to come.

Emily had not been intimate with Clara. She was a gay, careless girl, whom the quiet, thoughtful Emily did not seek as a friend; but now, being drawn into such close companionship, Emily felt very much for the sick and lonely girl, and waited with great attention and kindness on her uncle's young patient.

THE ARNOTTS.

It was Sunday afternoon, and Emily was sitting with Clara, the rest of the family having gone to afternoon service. The solemn sound of the church-bells calling upon those who heard them to assemble themselves together in the Lord's courts, came to the girls in their silent chamber.

"Is not that the church-bell ringing?" said Clara, who had been lying very quietly for some time. "Are you not going, Emily?"

"No; I intend to stay with you this afternoon," Emily replied, looking up from her Bible, which she had been reading.

"How kind of you to do so! and you are so fond of going to church! Do you know, Emily," she continued, "those bells make me feel very sad."

"Why, Clara?"

"Because they remind me, as I lie here, so weak and helpless, how often I have disregarded them when I ought to have attended to their summons and gone to God's house. Oh! if I had died, what would have become of me? I have been such a thoughtless, wicked girl!"

"God has been very good to you, then, Clara, in sparing your life, and giving you time for repentance," said Emily, very gravely.

"Indeed He has," she answered, earnestly. "What agony and despair I felt at the thought of dying, and having to appear before God, whom I had never loved or served!"

"Begin now, dear Clara. Show your gratitude to the Lord for His mercy to you, by leading a new and holier life."

THE ARNOTTS.

"Perhaps He won't receive me now," she said, mournfully. "I have been so forgetful of Him."

"Yes; He will," Emily eagerly answered, "for the Bible says, 'Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon;' and also 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'"

"Is that the Bible you have? Will you read me something?" she asked.

"Most willingly, Clara. I was reading the third chapter of Revelation. Listen to this verse, where our dear Saviour says, 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him.' See how willing He is to be gracious to those who will receive Him, and what precious promises are contained in these words, 'He that overcometh the same shall be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels!' and also this verse, 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne.' O Clara, think what a blessed, glorious eternity is promised to those who forsake their sins and turn to the Lord Jesus the Saviour of perishing sinners."

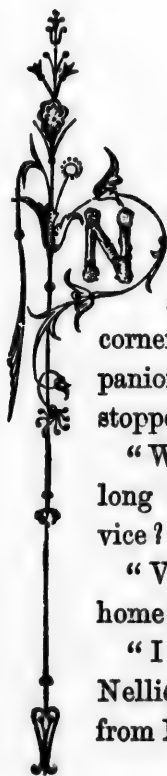




CHAPTER XI.

A Wise Decision.

"Lord, make us truly wise
To choose thy people's lot,
And earthly joys despise,
Which soon will be forgot:
The greatest evil we can fear
Is to possess our portion here."



NELLIE GRANT was returning home one day from an errand on which she had been sent by Mrs Berton, when, as she turned the corner of a street, she met one of her old companions, a girl about her own age, who immediately stopped her, exclaiming,—

"Why, Nellie Grant, I haven't seen you this long time. How do you like living out at service?"

"Very well, Amelia; it's better than being at home anyway."

"I suppose so. My goodness! how fine you are, Nellie!" remarked the girl, glancing enviously from Nellie's neat attire to her own miserable dress.

A WISE DECISION.

"You think yourself too grand now, I daresay, to speak to me."

"I don't think any such thing," Nellie answered, hastily.

"Why don't you come to see me, then?"

"Because I haven't time."

"Doesn't your mistress let you out on Sunday?"

"Yes; but then I go to Sunday-school or church."

"What, Nellie, are you turning pious?" observed her friend, in a sneering way, "or does your missis make you go?"

"No, she doesn't," replied Nellie, rather angrily, for the girl's manner was very provoking.

"Why do you go, then, instead of coming to see all your old friends in our alley?"

"Because I like it. I wouldn't miss going to Sunday-school for anything; such a kind young lady teaches me; and it's so nice to hear the beautiful hymns they all sing there."

"Well; that's a good joke," and Amelia laughed loudly. "I must tell your stepmother how religious you are getting. She is awfully mad against you, Nellie."

"What about? I haven't done anything to her," Nellie said, in a tone of surprise.

"She's angry that you are so well off, away from home; that she hasn't got you to make a drudge of and ill-treat any longer, I suppose. Didn't she lead you the life of a dog, Nellie, when you were with her?"

"That she did!" Nellie answered. "O, Amelia! how I used to hate the sight of her!"

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"And don't you hate her still, Nellie?"

"I try not now, because my teacher says it's very wicked to hate any one; so I try to forgive her all she has done to me," replied Nellie, seriously.

"Well; that beats all I ever heard!" Amelia exclaimed, in astonishment. "I wonder at you, Nellie; I never could forgive her, if I were you."

"It's mighty hard; but my teacher says, if we don't forgive those who have done us harm, God won't forgive us our sins; and the Saviour, Amelia, when He was dying on the cross, forgave His enemies who had treated Him so cruelly; the Bible tells us so."

"I dunno' nothing about the Bible; but I know I couldn't," said Amelia, doggedly. "What have you got in that basket?" she presently inquired, noticing that Nellie was carrying one.

"Some apples I've been buying."

"Give me some, like a good girl!" And Amelia tried to raise the lid of the basket.

Nellie drew it quickly away.

"I can't," she said; "they aren't mine."

"Your mistress won't know," answered Amelia; "give me one."

"No; it would be stealing," said Nellie, gravely.

"What a fool you are, Nellie!" Amelia replied, angrily. "It wouldn't be any such thing as stealing to take an apple; but you're stingy."

"I'm not stingy; you know that well enough; but these apples belong to Mrs Berton; and it would be stealing if I took any of them," Nellie earnestly observed.

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"I suppose your teacher at the Sunday-school told you that too," said Amelia, with a provoking laugh.

"Yes, she did; and I believe what she says, for she knows all about what's in the Bible. The eighth commandment says—'Thou shalt not steal;' and it's no matter how small the thing may be which we take; it is stealing, and a sin," said Nellie, in a decided manner.

"I don't believe it; it ain't," persisted Amelia.

"I used to think so too, before I learned at Sunday-school that it was wrong. I can't stop talking any longer, Amelia, for Mrs Berton will wonder what's keeping me so long." And bidding good-bye to her former companion, Nellie proceeded quickly on her way home.

Already was the holy teaching she received every Sunday from the lips of her earnest young teacher bringing forth good fruit in the heart and life of Nellie Grant, the once ignorant, unhappy girl.

It is an evening in the early spring; the lamp has just been lighted in Dr Arnott's parlour, where the family have assembled. Clara Douglas is there also; she has now quite recovered her health, and will soon return to school again. Dr Arnott has sat down to a game of draughts with her, when a messenger arrives requesting him to go immediately to Mr Croft's, their wealthy neighbour.

As her husband hastily left the apartment, Mrs Arnott remarked—

"I wonder what is the matter!" For Dr Arnott was not the Crofts' physician.

"Perhaps Miss Croft is worse," said Emily, glancing at Clara.

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"She is a very delicate girl, and has been suffering for some time from cold. Her mother can't get her to stay in and take care of herself. She told me the other day, when I was there, that she was determined to go to a party the next night, as she could not live any longer without some gaiety."

"Poor girl! how sad for her to regard life only in that light," observed Mrs Arnott.

Some time passed before Dr Arnott again joined his family. He sat down silently among them, looking very grave and thoughtful.

"Was it Miss Croft you were called to see, my dear?" inquired his wife.

"Yes; I was summoned in consultation," he replied.

"Why, is she so ill?"

"Before the morning dawns, Mary, she will be in eternity," he sadly answered.

"In eternity!" exclaimed Mrs Arnott, letting her work drop from her hands, and gazing at her husband in sad surprise, while Emily's and Clara's faces blanched at the startling intelligence.

"Yes; it is but too true; she is dying," Dr Arnott answered, mournfully.

"Ah!" said Clara, in tones of deep emotion, for Miss Croft was an acquaintance of hers. "I didn't think she was so ill, although I knew she had not been well for some time."

"She has had a bad cold, it appears," said Dr Arnott, "but neglected it. A few nights ago she persisted, contrary to her fond, though foolish parents' wishes, upon

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going to a party ; and the consequence was that the next day she was seriously ill, and has been since, but not in any danger, they hoped, until this evening, when during a violent fit of coughing she ruptured a blood-vessel, and there is now no hope for her. Oh ! what a scene I witnessed in that mansion to-night," he continued. "I shall never forget the anguish of the distracted parents, and the agonising despair of the dying girl, summoned so suddenly to meet her God. It was heartrending ! What a lesson it teaches us of the uncertainty of life and the necessity of being prepared to die ! for at any moment our souls may be required of us."

Emily and Clara could not rest much that night ; thoughts of the young girl, struck down so suddenly in the midst of her gay, thoughtless career, lying so helpless, and oh—awful thought !—so hopeless on her death-bed, haunted them, through the dark, silent hours of the night ; and Clara again thanked the Lord for His mercy to her in sparing her life and giving her time for repentance. Since her illness, and during her stay in Dr Arnott's family, she had been awakened to a sense of her danger in her indifference to heavenly things, and the neglect of her soul's salvation. Earnestly had she repented of her former life, and turned with love and fear to her merciful Saviour, who "is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

The next morning the shutters of Mr Croft's residence were closed, and there was crape on the door, proclaiming to the passers-by that, in a darkened chamber of that grand house, a form, so lately full of life and happiness, was lying

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cold and senseless. During the hours of darkness, another spirit had gone to meet its Maker.

It is a beautiful morning in the early part of October. The steamer *Java* is slowly steaming out of the harbour at Halifax, on her way to England. Mr Sutherland and his family are among the passengers. He has, by the death of a relative, come into the possession of a handsome property, and is going for the future to reside in England.

As the steamer left the wharf, he waved a last adieu to some one standing there, saying to Lucia, who was beside him--

"Poor Emily ! could any one have supposed she would be so foolish as to make the decision she has ?"

"Yes, to think of her choosing to remain with the Arnotts, preferring such a quiet, humdrum existence to going to England, where she would have so many advantages, and lead such a delightful life with us in our beautiful new home."

"Perhaps," observed Mrs Sutherland, who, in an elegant travelling costume, was sitting near, "it is just as well that she won't live with us—she is such a strange girl, so different from you, Lucia ; and the older she gets, the more decided she seems to become in her absurd notions. Her aunt's simpler style of living will no doubt suit her ideas of life better than ours."

"I suppose so, mamma. I know we never could think the same about anything ; there was no congeniality whatever between us."

As the *Java* passed out of sight, Mrs Arnott, who was

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standing with Emily on the wharf, having gone to Halifax with her, so that she might meet her uncle and bid the family good-bye, turned to her niece with a loving smile, saying—

“You are mine entirely now, love ; I have got another daughter.”

Emily returned her fond look as she answered, “And I have found a dear mother ; my choice, I’m sure, has been a wise and happy one.”

Thus it was that Emily parted from the Sutherlands ; giving up a life of wealth, ease, and pleasure in their family for the quiet home of her Aunt Arnott, where the Lord was loved and revered, and where she could, without rebuke or hindrance, follow the command which He has given to His children, “To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep herself unspotted from the world.”

Emily returned to her home in St John, where she grew up a good useful woman, showing by her life and example that she was indeed a sincere humble follower of the Blessed Saviour who has said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

THE END.

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